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A section entitled "Books Received," with short, non-critical annotations, will appear at intervals. For the present, no book reviews will be published. Publishers are invited to send new books for annotation. A note indicating price and publication date should be included.

Manuscripts written in English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Latin will be considered for publication. Manuscripts submitted must be typed in accordance with the *MLA Style Sheet*, and accompanied by return postage.

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An Experiment in Teaching French  
to Children from the Elementary School  
by Ann R. Blumenfeld, Louisburg College

When I was asked to speak to this group, my experiment in teaching French to children had just begun, and I had no idea what would emerge from it. It is an experiment in more ways than one:

First, the community with only some three thousand inhabitants is of a rather conservative and tradition-minded type, is located away from railroad communications in a mostly agricultural district, and is therefore not promising soil for such a venture.

Second, I came to teaching after a number of years of administrative work with the League of Nations; and my teaching before this recent undertaking had been only on the college level.

I realize that I am suspect on two counts: I grew up and received my education under the different concepts prevailing in Europe; also, I have not been specially trained for elementary education. To compensate for these shortcomings, I have tried for a number of years, by keeping up with the professional publications and by attending summer schools and workshops, to familiarize myself with the educational theories current in this country. Naturally, I am well aware of the fact that a knowledge of the subject matter to be taught is not enough to qualify for teaching, but I am heretic enough to consider subject matter more important than educational theory.

My firsthand experience in international work has left me with the strong conviction that it is of supreme importance to raise the language learning of our American youth above the present level, so as to mould them into articulate citizens of the world. We all know that such a goal can be attained only by starting the language instruction at an early age and by pursuing it for a number of years.

The first seed of the experiment which constitutes the topic of this paper was planted when late last spring quite unexpectedly I was asked by a friend from the American Association of University Women whether I would consider teaching French to her eight-year-old daughter. Thinking over the possibilities, we decided not to start until the fall and meanwhile tried to find whether some other children in the community might wish to join in so as to create more interest and competition and allow for games and songs.

A friend in France with whom I communicated about the plan was rather skeptical as regards its success. She had seen too many of her American pupils give up after a few months just when the first results of the teaching could be observed. In spite of this voice of warning, I decided to give the idea a trial.

I left the organization of the group entirely to my friend, for I wanted the experiment to start from the parents and not as a commercial venture. Considering, however, that fees are paid for music, dancing, and art lessons and taking into account the psychological fact that what is given free is often thought less valuable, we decided upon a small monthly charge for each child. It may be added that a considerable part of this money was used for realia: wall charts, song- and storybooks, and games.

In preparation for my experiment I seized every opportunity to acquire information on the methods employed in similar ventures in different parts of the country. I participated in the 1953 Middlebury workshop on language teaching in the Elementary grades and obtained some syllabi through the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the Department of Foreign Languages of the public schools of the District of Columbia. This material proved to be very useful. I also obtained Dr. Theodore Andersson's recent pamphlet on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary School, published by Heath and Co., and used to a certain extent the French Storybook Grammar by Spink and Millis, published by Ginn and Co., and different collections of French songs. Many valuable suggestions came from articles in the Modern Language Journal, the French Review, and similar publications. All this material had of course to be adapted to the special situation.

The enterprise was finally launched in November 1953; but the group, while fluctuating somewhat, has always been small. This limited enrolment is understandable in view of the size of the community and its rather provincial tendencies.

Originally I had intended to take only third graders, but two older girls asked insistently to be admitted. I drew their attention to the fact that they might get bored by the material, which necessarily had to be geared to the smaller children's interests and capabilities, but the newcomers were very persuasive and in view of my small enrolment I finally agreed, though contrary to my better judgment. As a result the group became somewhat heterogeneous, ranging from the ages of seven to thirteen; but the older children were co-operative, and, as all were starting without any previous knowledge of French and entirely by ear, the difference in age did not at first appear to be a serious handicap.

If the same situation presented itself again, however, I would remain firm and would keep classes at a more nearly uniform level of age and interests. In our case the older children who had wanted to learn "all about France" and who had been very eager to see the written word, gave up after two months, purportedly because of their countless afternoon activities. This confirmed to some extent my French friend's premonition. Such a result might have been avoided with a schedule of morning classes--impossible in our case because of my college commitments beginning at eight six days a week. I cannot help wondering what might have been the outcome, had I felt free to follow my inclination of appealing more to the intellect and giving the young minds the tools for which they were clamoring.

Our schedule of classes provided for two afternoon meetings from thirty to fifty minutes. At first the children came to the language laboratory of the college, a cheerful room of medium size. There are flowering plants, French railroad posters and reproductions of French paintings, wall charts, maps, a record-player, recording equipment, and numerous records, illustrated books and games. With the children seated here in a semicircle and surrounded by a variety of familiar objects, it seemed that the informality would help to loosen the tongues and that the material would suggest subjects of conversation. After two months, however, we happened to hold a meeting in a language classroom, and to my surprise the children asked to continue meeting there, declaring that the surroundings felt more like school. This statement made me wonder whether their attitude implied a readiness for something more than mere play.

Our experiment began with greeting formulas, and each child received a French name. Then, with the help of a wall chart and of animal pictures brought to class by the children, we proceeded to learn the names of some farm animals. Colors, numerals, and a few adjectives followed. Listening to a record the children learned the French alphabet and used it thereafter, although somewhat reluctantly. We took up the terms of family relationship with a game published by the Gessler Publishing Company, Hastings on Hudson, New York; set the table for a meal, naming each object in French as we went along; calculated and played Bingo; and dramatized Little Red Ridinghood, with a fox fur being a great success as the big bad wolf in grandmother's bed. The children learned to obey simple commands: opening and closing of books, door and windows, turning on the light, and the like. The memorizing of the days of the week and of the months led to conversation about the date of each child's anniversary and to explanations about the Fourth of July in the United States and the Fourteenth of July in France. Of course the children tended to say the month before the day when giving a date, as such information was naturally translated from English. At about this stage, a snowstorm gave rise to some conversation about the weather. "Alouette" and "Savez-vous planter des choux" were linked up with the teaching of parts of the body. After mastering

the numerals up to thirty, the children began to tell time in French as I changed the hands of an old kitchen clock brought to class by one of the pupils. It then came to light that our seven-year-old little Lucy did not yet know how to tell time in English, but she learned in French. As interest broadened, one day the little pupils asked to learn about French money; therefore, I obtained a hundred-franc note and some coins that a faculty member had brought back from France. The children were naturally amazed to learn that a hundred francs was the equivalent of only about twenty-five cents. In December seasonal cards were used for adding to the vocabulary some words relating to Christmas.

All activity we frequently interspersed with songs; first "Frère Jacques," in unison and soon in parts; then numerous other songs; and in December one or two Christmas carols; but the favorite became a Jacques Dalcroze song, "Il est difficile de tromper sa maman," which I remembered from my own childhood and found in an old German schoolbook of mine. Capitalizing on this preference, knowing Dalcroze's outstanding skill in writing for small children, and recalling some of his pupils' delightful performances that I had attended while living in Switzerland, I obtained some of his chansons pour les tout-petits, Le Jardin des Mioches. One of these songs dramatizes a shopping expedition, and thus led automatically to a game of playing store.

When we needed a piano we went to the music room, where I played the songs for them until the music became familiar. On this occasion, noticing that the children started to look over my shoulder to read the words, I immediately had to take care to prevent their pronouncing the silent consonants, by insisting on a purely auditory approach.

Realizing further that the children would try to reproduce faithfully the patterns of speech heard, I felt it advisable to address them with vous instead of tu, so as to avoid a lengthy explanation in English of the differences between the two forms of address while making certain that the use of the more important formal address would become automatic and be used when speaking to grownups. In view of children's delight in making things themselves, we manufactured together a vocabulary game; this proved very useful in vocabulary review which is, of course, indispensable and may become boring unless introduced under the guise of play.

Throughout, my objective has been to stimulate the latent interest concerning the people and ways of life of other lands, France in particular, and to lay the foundation for the learning of French as a living language to be spoken and understood. Accordingly, every effort has been made to stress correct pronunciation and to develop the ability to understand spoken French. I was, therefore, especially gratified when the children

told me of hearing French phrases in the movies and of being able to grasp the meaning, an evidence of beginning familiarity with French speech.

In spite of the generally encouraging aspects of our enterprise, I am aware of the all-important need for continuity in order to secure ultimate success. Will such continuity be realized both for the group already started and for the community? It is impossible to answer this question at the present juncture. I understand that because of organizational difficulties a plan to teach Spanish in the elementary grades of one of the public schools in the state capital has not yet progressed beyond the exploratory stage, although a highly competent teacher is available, an instance indicating that a considerable amount of work will still have to be done before official programs can be started. In this connection I noted in material received from the U. S. Office of Education,<sup>1</sup> which summarizes the situation by states, the revealing statement that French was offered for years in the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, but was "dropped one year after Miss Spink's retirement." (Miss Spink is coauthor of the French Storybook Grammar mentioned before, which was evidently written especially for the Chicago class.) If, in a city of the size of Chicago with the cosmopolitan atmosphere prevailing there, the continuation of such a program may depend on the initiative and enthusiasm of one person, it can be seen how precarious the situation must be in a small rural community such as ours.

An evaluation of the results obtained in our venture can be only tentative after so short a time. The immediate results are necessarily limited, but they are very similar to those reported from other parts of the country. It is certain that considerable interest has been aroused both in the community and in the college. People have discussed the experiment widely and have told me of cases where four- and six-year-old children learned to count in French from members of my group, the high-school paper brought a feature article about our little French scholars, and college students have asked to be allowed to visit the class. If we can capitalize on this favorable climate and create something permanent, a great step forward will have been taken.

We know that language learning is a slow process, and that the unsatisfactory results of much of our teaching must be attributed to the pitifully insufficient time allotted to it in our present curriculum in highschool and college. With only two or three years of three weekly contact hours in college, we can hardly expect to teach a student to understand, to pronounce and speak, to read and write correctly a foreign language, and to acquaint him at the same time with all the connected cultural subjects such as geography, national history and customs, art, literature and philosophy. It is to be hoped that the programs

that have recently sprung up all over the country will lead eventually to nationwide programs of language study through the elementary grades and continuing through high school, as is the case in many parts of Europe and of Latin America. If this goal can be attained, the American of tomorrow will be more articulate and better equipped for the responsibilities he will have to shoulder as a citizen of this world of shrinking distances.

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1. Conference on the Role of Foreign Languages in American Schools, January 1953. Report on Status of and Practices in the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Public Elementary Schools of the United States. Revised to July 1, 1953.

## German in the Fourth Grade

by Ernest E. Ellert, Hope College

In September, 1953, a pilot course in German was begun in the fourth grade of one elementary school in Holland, Michigan. During the preceding spring the plans were made for this course by a committee of public school personnel and members of the school board. In order to solve the problem of a teacher, I volunteered my services for the pilot course. As I have heretofore done only college teaching, it was felt that it would be easier for me to start with fourth grade children rather than youngsters who had not as yet become well accustomed to schoolroom routines and procedures. I might say that I entered that first class session in September with some misgivings, but they were entirely unfounded. Never in any teaching have I had such a cooperative, enthusiastic, eager-to-learn group of students. The period at the grade school is my dessert course this year. Everyone (children, regular teachers, and especially myself) has a wonderful time in the elementary school German class.

At first I expected to have a single room of fourth grade children, but due to the tremendous enrollments of our schools, two sections had to be made of the sixty-odd children eligible for the fourth grade in Longfellow School. When the parents heard that one section would receive foreign language instruction, they all raised such a clamor that there was no choice but to offer the instruction to both sections. Consequently, I spend one-half hour a day at the school, each section getting fifteen minutes of my time, five days a week. It may seem inconceivable to some of you that these children, over thirty in a class, could be learning to speak and understand German. It is quite true that in fifteen minutes I cannot call on every child individually, but by grouping the children by rows they get a chance to respond in threes and fours, and that way I can be sure that each has a chance to repeat the German phrase under consideration. And of course I nearly always have the entire class repeat anything a child has said individually, so that they all get constant practice in the use of the language. I am really surprised, however, that they do so well, and wonder what their progress would be if they could be taught in sections of ten or twelve pupils.

It seems hardly necessary to say that no English is ever used during the foreign language class period. In fact, it was several weeks before the children realized that I could speak English at all, and I let them continue as long as possible under the impression that I knew only German. It was in the second or third week of instruction, I believe, that a bell rang suddenly near the end of one class period. The children all looked startled and seemed uncertain what to do, but then they abruptly arose and filed out of the class, leaving me standing there. The next day I learned that on the playground they were

all laughing because they hadn't been able to explain to Herr Ellert that it was a fire drill, but had just had to leave me flat. It's quite true that by using no English the children often do not catch the meaning of something I say, but I feel that if it is repeated often enough and dramatized sufficiently, they will eventually comprehend everything I say and they are not tempted to make translations from one language to the other. After all, there is no hurry. By starting the language program while they are so young they have plenty of time. Most of us heard our native language for two or three years before we understood very much of it and tried to express ourselves in it. The way a child learns his own language should set the pattern for the way in which he learns a second language. His conversations in the classroom are limited to those things falling within the child's experience and he will learn a vocabulary that will allow him to express himself in his own world.

This brings up a point which needs some clarification. There seems to be a misconception among a great many teachers that language and formal grammar are synonymous. There are even those who laugh with scorn at the idea of teaching a foreign language by any means except a formal presentation of grammar, even to grade-school children. Certainly grammar is a part of any language, as is vocabulary, and pronunciation, and intonation, but that is not to say that any one of these elements in itself is a language. Somewhere along the line, long after our civilizations had developed and people had been using language for many centuries, the linguists began taking our speech apart and classifying it as to grammar, pronunciation, etc. No one would be so foolish as to say, however, that not until that was done did anyone use a language. Likewise, no one would be so foolish as to recommend that we explain each part of speech to the child in the cradle so that he could use it correctly when he learned to talk. On the other hand, all of us who are parents know the thrill of realizing that the baby has at last learned to communicate his wants to us and to understand what we say to him. We know that if he hears correct speech from us constantly, he will also speak correctly as he matures. So with teaching a foreign language to grade-school children. As they hear only the correct forms of the language over the years, as they see these forms in print a little later on, they will naturally acquire and use the proper grammatical and syntactical forms. Then, after they have reached an age when linguistic terminology will make sense to them, they will be in a position to profit from a more formal study of the grammar of the language.

I have often been asked what the language instruction replaced in the grade-school curriculum. The answer is very simple: NOTHING! Merely by a more efficient use of time, we found room for the language program. In other words, the children don't waste so much time as formerly. Since the program started, the school board and administration have been receiving complaints

from the parents of the children in the other three public elementary schools in town because their children are not getting any foreign language instruction, while the parents of the Longfellow children are, on the whole, delighted and appreciative of the efforts and time expended in this way on their fourth-graders.

Since there was very little available in the way of material suitable for use with young children, I spent most of my spare time last year preparing a teacher's manual that I could use this year. I tried to select areas of natural interest to the children and then divided the work into broad units. There is no specific amount of time spent on any one unit. When the children have gained control of the material we move on to something new. I was very fortunate during the first weeks of the course to have the help of a student teacher that I selected from among my better students at the college. She was really of invaluable help in getting across the concept of greetings and introductions and in performing the appropriate actions for the simple orders I would give, such as to write her name on the board, to erase something, to open or close the door, etc. Undoubtedly the children picked up the language faster than they might otherwise have done because she was there to lend her assistance. Along with the regular conversations, each of which entails much use of repetition and dramatization, I have made a great deal of use of songs and games. With the exception of a number of Christmas carols the children learned, the songs, games, and poems that I teach the children employ to a large extent the vocabulary being learned in the unit. For example, after we had learned the names of the colors, we learned the singing game, "Grün, grün; grün sind alle meine Kleider."

Last summer I used the same material on a group of college students, omitting, of course, the games, songs, etc. With the students, whom I was teaching for three hours a day in an eight-week course, I also used simple readers, but for the conversational part of the program I found the same material prepared for the elementary school children very effective. Naturally they covered the material at a much faster pace, so that in eight weeks they had learned as much as I would expect my fourth-graders, in fifteen minutes a day, to acquire in a year and a half or more. Some of these students, incidentally, were elementary school teachers who were interested in starting language programs in their own schools and so they were particularly anxious to become acquainted with the type of material that could be used with children. On the other hand, when some people outside my class heard that I had used the grade-school lessons on the college class and intended to do so again, they raised their eyebrows and scoffed, "But that's kindergarten stuff. You can't use such elementary language in college classes."

This notion is, I believe, another common misconception regarding languages. Just what is elementary language? Are we justified in labelling our courses Elementary German, Intermediate German, and so on? There is certainly such a thing as elementary language. It is the baby's first attempts at sounds and his experiments to control the vocal noises he finds he can make. Out of that babbling and gurgling will develop the ability to make an almost infinite variety of sounds, from which he will select those that are used by the adults around him to convey meaning. And so he reaches the point where he is able himself to communicate with others by means of the sounds he can make, but he has not yet acquired the accepted pronunciation or structural patterns that are considered standard. In short, he can communicate with those who are constantly with him, but outside of the home he will find many who fail to understand what he is trying to say. At this point we might say he is using "intermediate" language. By the time a child is three or four, however, and certainly by the time he enters school, he will generally be using the same language his parents use, although his vocabulary is not as extensive as theirs. A great many factors have entered into his language learning by that time, so that in any kindergarten there will be quite a diversity of language skill among the children, a diversity that continues to increase as the child grows older. We all know adults who seem unable to express themselves much better than many kindergarten children. Still, their language, and that of the children, too, can no longer be classified as elementary, for they are able to communicate their thoughts and wants and to understand the expressed thoughts and desires of others.

Looking at our foreign language instruction in this light, do we ever teach "elementary" or even "intermediate" language? The answer is obviously that we do not. We always teach the standard language, used alike by adults and children in a foreign land, regardless of whether we offer the instruction to young children, to high school pupils, to college students, or to adult evening classes. The learners all start from the same point--no knowledge of the vocabulary, structure, or sound system of the foreign language under consideration, and consequently all have the same things to learn if they are to acquire this new means of communication. The type of vocabulary and the amount they are capable of learning in a given length of time will, naturally, vary considerably according to the age of the student, his intelligence, and his interest or eagerness to learn.

One other point I would like to mention is that there are college language teachers who feel or are afraid that if we teach foreign languages to grade-school children, we will be hurting ourselves, for there will be no one left to teach when these children reach college age. If such were the case, then no one would take mathematics in college, having learned arithmetic in the grades; no one would study English literature, or many

other subjects which are also introduced early in the child's schooling. I believe there would be so much more interest aroused in foreign language study that our departments would be filled with students who could actually read the great literature found among all languages. We could at last teach in college those things worthy of the mature student's consideration--drama, philosophy, and poetry, just to mention a few, and the student would be capable of discussing this literature in the language in which it was written.

To return to the Holland program: there are many problems still to be settled. About all I can say further is that we have made a start, and having started it would be difficult to stop. As our Superintendent of Schools expressed it, "We have a lion by the tail." The school board wants the program to go on and to be extended to the other public elementary schools in the city, and the parents of the Longfellow school children want it to continue, though in all honesty I must admit that there are a few who would prefer to have their children learn French or Spanish, which presents the problem of how to offer several languages so that everyone may make a choice. Certainly the children themselves want to continue and most of them don't care what language they are learning. The biggest problem is probably that of securing teachers who are qualified to teach a foreign language. A lesser one is the matter of the grade in which to start the instruction. The Superintendent has been asked to appoint a committee consisting of members of the school board, laymen, public school teachers, and language teachers from the college to discuss these matters and to try to arrive at some satisfactory solutions. What this committee will decide remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, to those interested in starting similar programs in their communities, I would suggest that they meet with the school board and urge the members to consider the national needs and to explore all the language resources of the community before deciding on any one language. America needs people who have the ability to use many languages, and we should not ignore some of the lesser known tongues. There are some wonderful programs already going forward in French and Spanish, and there are a few started in German. There need to be more in the latter language as well as some developed in Russian, Polish, Italian, and the Oriental languages, to mention a few fields that have been much neglected to date. But remember, whatever your choice of language or languages that you wish to offer in your schools, once started the children don't want to stop, their parents don't want them to stop, so there is nothing left for the school administration to do but find a full-time teacher and assume the necessary expense to continue the language program. By volunteering to get a program started, not only will you be educating the youngsters in the use of a valuable foreign language, but you will also be doing your country a real service.

## The Teaching of Spanish in the Second Grade

by Elizabeth Etnire, Central Michigan College of Education

The teaching of Spanish in our Elementary Training School began in the summer of 1943, and has been continuous ever since. This is only the second year, however, that it has been included as a daily and regular part of the elementary school curriculum, and as such we feel that it is still on an experimental basis. A member of the staff of the College Foreign Language Department meets with the elementary children each day (from the second through the sixth grades) for fifteen minute periods. It is the purpose of this paper to show how we spent those fifteen daily minutes with our second graders during the first semester of this school year.

It did not seem wise to conduct the classes entirely in Spanish, although the use of English was kept at a minimum. Many Spanish meanings were conveyed to the children by actions and gestures.

The first week was spent in what I believe has almost become the standard method of introducing children to a foreign language; this is, in teaching them greetings, various colors, and the numbers from one to ten. Only a week was spent in concentrated effort on this vocabulary, although the greetings were used each day at the beginning of class and soon became as much a part of the children's vocabulary as the English equivalents. The colors and numbers of various objects in the room were mentioned each day, thus making it difficult for the children to forget those words.

During the second and third weeks the members of the family were presented by means of small plastic dolls: a mother, father, girl, boy, and a baby. The instructor would hold up one of the dolls and say, "This is the father," and then indicate for the children to repeat the sentence. After practicing this until they all seemed to know the words well, the instructor gave the five dolls to five children; she indicated for each child to stand, hold up his doll, and tell the class which one it was. The children loved holding the dolls, and seemed to enjoy a feeling of importance as they stood and announced which doll they had. These five children in turn gave their dolls to five other children, and so on until each child had held one. After they were all thoroughly familiar with these words, they reviewed the colors by noting the color of the mother doll's dress, the little girl's blouse, and so forth.

During the fourth week a doll house was brought to class. The house measures  $1\frac{1}{4}$  by 25 inches, and has an open back so that all the rooms can be seen. It is white, with a red roof,

and is gaily decorated on the exterior with brightly colored flowers and shrubs painted near the windows and the door. On the first day words such as house, window, roof, chimney, and flowers were introduced. The children were so interested in the house that they were eager to learn how to name its different parts in Spanish. The second day they were taught to touch the roof and say, "This is the roof; it is red;" or the house as a whole and say, "This is a house; it is white." During the latter part of the week the children were given papers on which were the drawn outlines of a house. The instructor showed them a box of crayons and indicated for them to get theirs from their desks. They were then told in Spanish what colors to use for each part of the house. Children of this age love to color, and being told in Spanish what colors to use seemed to make it all the more enjoyable to them. One little boy was thrilled with the idea that he was "coloring in Spanish."

During the fifth week the instructor again took the doll house to class, along with the small plastic furniture for the living room. The children sat on the floor in a semi-circle, around the instructor who was holding the furniture. This sort of a story-telling-time seating arrangement added a certain "coziness" to the lesson. The children were intensely interested in the furniture, almost to the point of being excited about it. Each piece was held up by the instructor, given its Spanish name (which the children repeated), then placed in the living room of the doll house. The following day only the furniture was brought to class and several minutes were spent pronouncing the Spanish names again. The instructor then placed the furniture on a table in the classroom and told individual children to stand, walk to the table, pick up a certain piece of the toy furniture, take it to the classroom teacher (or one of the other children), return to his chair, and sit down. The purpose of this particular phase of the work was to encourage the children to follow directions given in Spanish. They were all eager to hold the furniture, and it was both amazing and gratifying to see how easily they understood the instructions.

On some days this same exercise was used while the doll house was in the classroom; the child then had to understand which piece of furniture he was to take, whether he was to give it to someone in the room (if so, what person) or to place it in the doll house (if so, in which room). This same general technique was used for each room in the house. On the closing day of this unit, all the furniture for all the rooms (some 35 pieces) was placed on a table in the classroom. The children were told, individually, to go to the table, take a certain piece of furniture, give it to some person in the room, or place it in the correct room of the house. Very few mistakes were made.

Simple activities were introduced in conjunction with the study of the various rooms. For example, while "studying" the bedroom, the children learned to sing a simple lullaby in Spanish; with the living room they learned to introduce friends.

Around Christmas time they learned to say "Merry Christmas" and to sing "Away In A Manger" in Spanish. Shortly after the Christmas holidays the instructor started a series of lessons using the Number Readiness Charts printed by Scott Foresman and Company. These charts are two and a half feet by one and three-quarters feet in size, and are colorful pictures of interest to children. Chart number 3 is a picture of a little boy looking at a group of baby birds in a nest located among some flowers. The mother bird is flying overhead. This picture was used for reviewing the colors and other vocabulary, and for learning new words such as nest, baby birds, and mother bird. Later on, the children hope to compose simple stories about the various pictures.

During the last week of the semester the children showed an interest in learning to tell time in Spanish. They had been learning to do so in English, and enjoyed comparing the two. Only on-the-hour and half-hour times were learned during that week.

Every fifth or sixth lesson was devoted to story telling or singing activities. The children learned such songs as Fray Felipe, Ten Little Indians, and Happy Birthday (in Spanish, of course). Two stories were read: Angelo, the Naughty One, by Helen Garrett, and Gregorio and the White Llama, by Laura Bannon. These are both written in English, but much of the conversation in both books was read in Spanish by the instructor. The children were often requested to repeat these short conversations, imitating the sounds, expressions, and gestures of the instructor; they were so interested in the stories that they often seemed to be completely unaware that they were repeating the conversations in another language. Two stories were told to the children in Spanish: Little Red Ridinghood, and Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Although there were many words used that the children did not know, they were able to guess, by the gestures and actions of the instructor, as well as by the recognition of some of the words, what the stories were. The children were, perhaps, more enthusiastic about this part of the program than any other, and were literally thrilled when they were able to guess what the stories were.

It has been our hope to give our second graders the beginnings of a basic vocabulary in Spanish, a good pronunciation, and a general all-round elementary foreign language background. But it has been our special hope to implant in them an understanding, appreciation, and a "feeling" for the language and for the people who speak it. We felt that we had made at least a small beginning when we overheard one of the little boys mumble, "Ay!" instead of "Ouch!" as he struck his elbow on the corner of his desk.

## Foreign Languages in Atlanta Elementary Schools

by Evelyn E. Ewing, Atlanta Public School, Atlanta, Georgia

French and Spanish classes were introduced into seven of Atlanta's elementary schools in 1952. The results from this pioneer work are serving as a nucleus and stimulation for the present program. There are now 5,426 pupils enrolled either in French or Spanish from the primary through the seventh grade. The teachers are especially trained in this work--they are certified by the State and the project is financed by the City School Administration. These courses are offered at the request of Principal, Parent and Teacher. The classes are elective and are without scholastic restriction for admission. The atmosphere in the classroom is informal and enjoyable. No text, no test, no grade is used, and the vocabulary is built around the pupil's interest in his school, his home, and his play. Instruction is through oral and aural exercises.

The objectives of these courses are:

1. To arouse an interest in peoples of other countries, their language, customs, and contributions to American culture.
2. To make French and Spanish enriching factors of the regular school routine by correlating these classes with English, arithmetic, art, history, social science, music, and physical training.
3. To promote indirectly a better use of the English language.
4. To build in the child a vocabulary of practical foreign words and expressions through dramatizations, songs, play-activities and creative dialogues.
5. To encourage the class to use these French and Spanish words and phrases both in and out of school when the occasion arises.
6. To develop skills which will lead to quick and accurate thinking.
7. To instill in the child such an appreciation of and enthusiasm for the new language that he will show an eagerness and determination for further study of that type through high school and college.

It is in the pre-adolescent age that the pupil imitates without reservation or self-consciousness. Observation has

shown that during the formative years of from five to twelve, a language can be learned most readily. It is then that the organs of speech are flexible. Without inhibitions or questioning, the small child, through singing, dancing, dramatizing or creating dialogues, absorbs the features of a new language normally in the same manner in which he learned his native tongue.

Dr. Walter W. Du Brueiul, Language Coordinator of the Cleveland, Ohio, High School System, once said that the great difficulty of language study in America is that it has always been too little and too late. On another occasion, he remarked that America enjoys the doubtful distinction of being the only country in the world where foreign language study is begun as late as the high school.

In a conversation with Dr. Stursberg of Hamburg, Germany, he described to me the intensive requirement, in German schools, of the study of English and usually one other language beside their own. This program is begun in primary grades and is continued through high school and college. Sometimes a foreign child may be found speaking smoothly three or four languages. With the bi-lingual endowment which all children seem to possess, this early training has made children of foreign lands distinctly language-conscious.

In Atlanta, each year, we yearn to become champions and good friends in our Havalanta Competitive Sports Contests. There is not a boy, girl, or adult who has made that enviable trip to Cuba who has not wished that he had been taught the history, geography and language of his hosts. In turn, when large numbers of these Spanish speaking neighbors come to visit us, many awkward situations could be avoided by both groups knowing the expressions of courtesy and possessing the facility of conversation that would make possible a friendly exchange of ideas and information. The boys of Emory's Glee Club, on tour in Europe last summer, wished on many occasions that they had studied other languages.

Any child of Atlanta, today, may through picture-show, television, travel or residence become a seasoned visitor in foreign countries. In later years, through war conditions, business enterprise or governmental service, he may have close contact with other lands. The early study of a language may develop skills which could prove very valuable in helping the child of today find and fill his place in the world of tomorrow.

We cannot yet feel secure that this embryonic experiment is certain to succeed. Dr. Theodore Andersson of Yale University in his Preliminary Edition of The Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools says: "It will succeed only if it is well done. We must strike out along new paths,

aware of traditions but not fettered by them, and resolve to set our standards as high as possible. These are the ideals which must sustain us in our efforts to do our part in helping to fashion a peaceful world."

Our elementary language project is indeed a long-range undertaking. We must not be impatient. It is important to lay such a foundation with care. There are technical conditions of progress such as:

1. The people involved must be fully aware of the practical features of the experiment.
2. Qualified teachers with a conviction of their task and an enthusiasm for the success of the program must be secured.
3. Cooperation between principal, language teacher, and other members of the faculty, who must plan together for a continuity from grade to grade.
4. High schools and colleges should promise a program of language sequence. Without this, both the elementary child and the teacher lack the proper incentive for diligent application.
5. Parent-Teacher organizations should assure the wholehearted support of the community.
6. The press, school boards, educators and citizens have the right and responsibility of being informed as to the full meaning, value, and needs of such a program.
7. Seminar courses for the training of beginning teachers should be offered by local college and high school instructors. These, of course, should also serve for refresher aids and exchange of problems and ideas for the experienced teacher.

Washington, San Francisco, San Diego, and Cleveland all tell us that overnight results are not to be expected. But in this short time we, in Atlanta, are grateful that our press has been alerted, is interested and sympathetic, that the parents are enthusiastic and that the pupils are filled with pride with what they have already learned. Through cooperation, determination and hard work we expect to move forward to even more satisfying results.

## The Carbondale (Illinois) Elementary Foreign Language Program

by Hellmut A. Hartwig, Southern Illinois University

"One or more foreign languages are now being taught in the public schools of at least 150 communities in thirty-four states." This quotation from Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools. Some Questions and Answers, which the Modern Language Association has been distributing of late, seems to indicate that we in Carbondale are not exactly unique with our program. However, we are not "Johnnies-come-lately" either. We heard the call issued by the then U. S. Commissioner of Education, Earl James McGrath, on May 3, 1952, when he read a paper before the St. Louis meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association. The Carbondale Elementary Foreign Language Program got under way on October 1, 1952, as the direct result of the Commissioner's historic address. Before that time, I simply never got to first base with my repeated attempts to create interest for such a program.

This is what has been done in Carbondale to date: I started one sixth grade German class in 1952. Then, the following year, I was able to organize four additional classes in German at the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels and one French class at the sixth grade level. In the fall of 1953, the expanded program embraced one colored and two white elementary schools as well as the University Training School. Two foreign exchange students, one from Austria and the other from France, and two of my own advanced students of German have been helping me this past year. The class I conducted the first year of the program (and which I attempted to continue as a seventh grade German group) had to be discontinued, when I lost one of my helpers at the beginning of the Spring Term. For the same reason, a sixth grade German class at one of the white schools had to be dissolved. However, we hope to be able to induce a substantial number of these "orphans" to enroll in our projected summer school pilot classes, which are to run parallel to our Summer Workshop in Foreign Language Teaching at the Elementary School Levels."

Subtracting the casualties just cited from the total number of foreign language classes being taught in the grades, this is, then, what we are doing at the moment: Twice a week, for forty minutes each time, I teach a sixth grade German group at Brush Elementary School. Three times a week, also about forty minutes each time, I teach sixth grade German at the colored school, the Attucks Elementary School. Both these classes meet before the regular school program begins: from 8:00 to 8:40 or 8:45, depending on how noisy things get toward the end. At Brush, where we have to meet in the school lunch room, the cooks begin banging pots and pans anytime between 8:35 and 8:45 a.m., while at Attucks it is the arrival of the early birds among the school's monolingual scholars which usually manages to end

our morning session somewhat ahead of schedule. Dr. Mayr, our Austrian exchangee, teaches a mixed seventh and eighth grade German class at the University Training School. He meets his charges three times a week, from 3:00 to 3:40 p.m. Miss Untereiner, our exchange student from France, has a sixth grade French class, which also meets at the University Training School and at the same time and as often as Dr. Mayr's German group. To sum up then: There are right now in Carbondale one French and three German classes at the elementary school levels, while two more German groups are held in abeyance due to teacher shortage.

Now then, what has been accomplished so far? We proved to the town's educators and to the townspeople that there is area interest in foreign language study opportunities at the elementary school levels once they are offered. Fifty-seven pupils had heeded my call back in 1952 and enough parents and/or pupils became interested by the following year to allow the creation of those additional classes I have just mentioned. Then, we showed that between forty and fifty percent of the children in each case remained enthusiastic enough to continue their language studies from term to term whenever a teacher was available. This is a high percentage, by the way. How many pupils would stick it out in case of--let us say--voluntary social studies, or optional art, music and health classes, not to mention the rest of the courses which compose our present enforced elementary school curricula? Finally, we furnished proof in a number of instances of the actual progress made on the part of our Carbondale pupils by letting them perform before Parent-Teacher Association groups and once even before delegates to the regional convention of the Illinois Educational Association. Said delegates, incidentally, went away highly impressed by the demonstration, or so they said, at any rate.

In the process of trying to implement our program, what did we learn? We found out that we could expect a certain amount of help from such public school officials as our genial superintendent of schools, Mr. Winkler, and elementary school principals like Dr. Mees of the University School, Mr. Moore at Lincoln, and Mr. Thomas at Attucks, to mention only a few. We also discovered that whenever the problem of continuity came up, the bubbling fountain of good will suddenly began to go dry. Continuity for any given Foreign Language Elementary School Program sooner or later will have to involve the hiring of full-time foreign language teachers by the public school officials themselves. Finding a spot for the foreign language or languages within the regular school program (not before or after) will also be their umenviable function. Our Carbondale school officials know this, of course. However, regardless of their own degree of conviction as to the desirability of foreign language instruction in the grades, extra funds for paying full-time elementary school foreign language teachers have to be extracted from economy-minded and rather reluctant school boards.

These school boards would have to go before the voters and in effect ask that these voters tax themselves some more in order to make the elementary school foreign language program an integral and successful part of the primary school offerings. Now, it so happens (and many other small-town communities must be in the same fix) that Carbondale recently approved a bond issue with which to finance a rather ambitious school building project. The approval of this bond issue has brought the city very close to the limits of its legal borrowing capacity. Any attempt to borrow more money via the bond method would not only be political suicide for board members and school officials alike, but it would plunge the city into legal difficulties as well. Thus it becomes a matter of "first things first" with our school officers, while we at the University will just have to "hurry up and wait," to borrow a leaf from the Armed Forces' basic philosophy.

As Carbondale proceeds to use its bond-issue money to build badly needed schools and also to improve and enlarge existing physical plant facilities, and then (as the superintendent intimated) uses remaining funds to hire remedial reading experts and specialists for the handicapped, our Foreign Language Department at Southern does both "hurry up" and "wait." In fact, we already hurried up to the point of setting in motion the necessary machinery for phase two of our project: the aforementioned summer workshop for elementary and high school teachers interested in our language program. Again we are not unique in this matter: twenty-five colleges and universities are now offering workshops in teaching foreign languages in elementary schools, according to the latest report from Dr. Mildenberger's MLA office. However, we certainly are in the vanguard, for twenty-five institutions of higher learning from among a total of 1,851<sup>2</sup> can only be called an avant-garde at most, a mere trickle, which must become a flood; soon; especially with regard to German. Note, please, that only six of the twenty-five workshop courses concern themselves with German. That is why you here today and our colleagues in German Departments everywhere should "get a move on," as the saying goes. I am glad this report somehow got stuck among all the learned and scholarly papers you have been hearing this Friday afternoon, because if I were to read this at Saturday's session on the "Teaching of Languages in the Elementary Schools," I would be addressing the wrong people really, people who are already won over to my point of view. Too much of this type of self-hypnosis is going on in our profession and at our various conventions. An expert on Goethe listens to another expert on Goethe, then gets up and leaves contemptuously when the Jean Paul devotee, for instance, starts his paper. This is the Ivory Tower Complex, or as Jean Paul might label it today: "Einkräftiger Titanismus," which wants to hear only what it already believes. This refusal to come out of the rarified atmosphere of higher education is the raison d'être for the propaganda with which the "Rockefellered" Dr. Mildenberger feels constrained to bombard us.

This haughty resting on our haunches is the reason, too, for the pitifully small number of foreign language departments currently engaged in or about to engage in the endeavor to put elementary foreign language instruction where it obviously belongs. And here is a thought: Once foreign languages are widely taught in the grades, not only will the entire nation benefit diplomatically, militarily, economically, culturally, but we on our educational Mount Olympus will no longer have to teach beginning courses year after year to the practical exclusion of everything else. Just imagine a Ph. D. in German, who can actually devote (if so inclined) all his time and energy to German literature and, now and then, even brush up on his French and Spanish, and do this right away, at the very start of his teaching career. So, if only for purely selfish reasons, let us hurry and help bring about this dream. Let us start volunteer grade school classes in our respective areas. Then, let us organize workshop courses for the professional grade school teachers who wish to use their foreign language skills within their present primary programs. And let us always try to set up such workshops as education courses, which (as at Southern) can be counted on a major in Foreign Languages as well as in Education, on either an undergraduate or graduate level. Get the College of Education (as we did) to furnish some of the required instructors for the workshop. Thus they will be on your side of the fence. Why assume that the education people would not coöperate? Ask them, and see what happens! Maybe they will be of one mind with Calvin Grieder, Professor of School Administration at the University of Colorado, who in the Nation's Schools for September 1953 states: "Until recently, I was sort of neutral, but...recent contributions have converted me to an affirmative position...I venture to predict that F.L. teaching in elementary schools (may it prosper!) will improve the teaching at the high school level."

But to get back to Carbondale. The past and present activities of our university staff members as temporary or impromptu grade school teachers of foreign languages we look upon as Phase One of our program. As mentioned, the "Workshop" constitutes Phase Two for us. What is Phase Three, then? Phase Three begins the moment one of our workshop graduates attempts to utilize French, German, or Spanish language skills in his or her elementary school work. The advent of Phase Four would be the first hiring of a full-time foreign language instructor on the part of the school boards in the area.

The Carbondale Program has shown that Phases One and Two can be successfully initiated and maintained by a college or university. An individual member of a high school staff or a grammar school faculty might also be successful under favorable circumstances, but he cannot compete with a university professor who--as in my case, for instance--has the financial backing of the Graduate School, which has designated the program as a research project involving special grants for text

books, secretarial assistance, and travel to conferences, language laboratories, or to this and other conventions. And then there are the foreign exchange students. With all these advantages, to enumerate just a few, we at Southern Illinois University feel that it would be a disgrace not to participate, now that Dr. McGrath and so many other prominent persons, from President Eisenhower on down, have helped tear down the walls of prejudice, hostility, and indifference, which for so long inhibited the growth of foreign language study in the United States.

Phase Three, the attempts of our workshop graduates to integrate foreign languages into the elementary school curriculum, will require much tact on our part. Here is where all persons concerned should exercise great caution, most of all the university professors who spark-plugged the program. All appearance must be avoided of trying to displace other essential areas of instruction. The emphasis must be on integration, not displacement. We at Carbondale intend merely to furnish the elementary school teachers with tape recordings, if their schools have machines to utilize such tapes. Of greater use will be the disk recordings we have made, since the teacher and the pupil can play such disks on any ordinary phonograph, and it is easier to pick certain passages for purposes of repetition from the disks than it is from the tape or wire spools. In addition we shall stand ready at any time to aid the integration process in other possible ways, such as supplying needed mimeographed materials, text books, or simply good advice.

Phase Four, of course, means that regular language specialists are taking over from the "pinch hitters," that the public has accepted foreign languages as an essential part of the grammar school curriculum, and that this country is finally growing up to its global responsibilities. For us at the college and university levels it will mean that after "hurrying up" we can now afford to "wait," but not for long. When that first wave of freshmen trained under any of the various proposed foreign language plans, the 8-4, the 6-6, the 6-3-3, or the 6-2-4 plans,<sup>4</sup> hit our campuses, our wait will be over and real university-type foreign language teaching can begin. With large advanced foreign language classes to lecture to, research as well as teaching will receive an enormous boost, which in turn will attract more of the brainier from among our students to our profession.

This happy vision of a rosy future for our fields of specialization can be brought nearer realization, we Carbon-dalians believe, by heeding the F. L. Bulletin's request of 17 March 1954 to make speeches to non-teacher organizations, such as church groups, Rotary, Elks, and other service clubs, and by writing articles for state or regional or specialized periodicals, particularly denominational magazines--both

speeches and articles, of course, to be on the teaching of foreign languages in our elementary schools. Besides prodding our departmental colleagues to make such speeches and write such articles, we are not overlooking the prominent figures on the S. I. U. campus in general. The deans, for example, are incessantly making speeches to various groups on something or other. Why should we not urge them to make speeches on behalf of our current cause? But one of our good friends in the College of Education did not wait to be prodded. He is already touring the area and spreading the good word wherever he goes.

Apropos, College of Education. There are still many there who need a lot of convincing before we can expect active co-operation on their part. However, the best manner of making converts of our anti-linguistic colleagues, we feel, is for us to really mind our own business, which here means concentrating on our present elementary foreign language efforts, for as long as the Carbondale and other similar E. F. L. Programs continue and prosper, they in themselves will constitute the most convincing argument in favor of an eventually nation-wide, all-embracing foreign language program.

Paraphrasing John Paul Jones, I really should have called this little paper: "Sirs, we have only just begun to teach!" For there is no smug satisfaction over what little we may have accomplished in Carbondale. We only feel that we have made an encouraging beginning, but that there are still many formidable obstacles to overcome or to circumnavigate. It won't be easy, but there is no doubt of the eventual outcome. As long as we do not retreat into our Ivory Towers here at Southern, and elsewhere, the day will surely come when foreign languages are firmly established as an integral part of our elementary school curriculum.

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1. Besides a pilot class in German, there is to be one in French and another in Spanish, each at a different grade level.
2. The U. S. Office of Education lists (as of 1949-50) 641 public and 1210 private institutions of higher learning within the continental limits of the United States.
3. Foreign Language Newsletter, March 1954. FNL-2.
4. Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools. Some Questions and Answers. Modern Language Association, page 9 and elsewhere.

Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools of Richmond, Virginia

by Mildred A. Kline, Richmond, Virginia, Public Schools

The teaching of modern languages to elementary children is an illuminating experience. This is a program that does not have to be sold; it sells itself. Not only are administrators, parents, and teachers amazed at the rapidity and facility with which children learn to understand and speak French and Spanish, but they are astounded by the eagerness and starry-eyed enthusiasm of the learners who look forward to their lessons with "madame" or "señora."

A knock on the door, and a lusty "Bonjour, Madame" or "Buenos días, señora" connote for the members of the class a time of sheer joy, judging from the look of gladness and expectancy on their bright and eager faces. Soft claps, indicative of happiness, often greet the entrance of the teacher, and it is then that the door of opportunity for understanding the language and the heart throb of another people is opened to the future citizens of our land.

In the Public Schools of Richmond, Virginia, we have been experimenting with the teaching of French and Spanish since the fall of 1952. This step was the outgrowth of interest shown by pupils of a sixth grade Social Studies class at Albert H. Hill Junior High and Elementary School, when in their study of South America they expressed the wish that the language teacher be permitted to visit their class and teach them some phrases and expressions in Spanish. So impressed with the eagerness of the children to learn Spanish was the Principal that he described the experience in his annual report to the Superintendent. The Director of Instruction and I had been watching the sixth grade experiment with interest, and since it was successful, the Superintendent and the Director of Instruction decided to include one class each of French and Spanish in the curriculum at Albert H. Hill School, on an experimental basis. Accordingly, the language teacher began teaching Spanish to a 4H group and French to a 4L class.

This early-level study of French and Spanish has been expanded to include four additional white schools and one negro school. Since the idea originated at Albert H. Hill School, the schools selected are in an area that feed either to this school or to Westhampton Junior High and Elementary School, both of which are feeder schools to one senior high school. The James H. Blackwell Junior High and Elementary School for negroes is the one in which we have a language teacher. Through a continuity program, which we are planning to set up, to and through the high school, we intend to compare the language skills of these students with those of pupils who have traditionally begun language study in grades 9, 10, or 11. It is our sincere belief that boys and girls, stimulated with language learning at

an early age will be in a position to go further in this field more avidly and more successfully than the pupil who has had to wait until junior or senior high school for this training, when aural comprehension and oral facility are more arduous to attain. In addition, students continuing language study in college will be able to do so on an advanced scale comparable to the maturity-level of college courses in other fields. Our thinking is that in college students will want to pursue study in French and Spanish begun in the elementary grades and continued through high school, for during these years they will have acquired such a marked degree of proficiency that these language skills will be a part of their general education, not clumsy, because they have mastered them. This achievement should certainly eliminate, or help to eliminate, beginning French and Spanish classes of high school level in college, taken frequently listlessly and languidly, often merely to fulfill language requirements for the diploma. Similarly, non-college students will have gained an understanding of foreign peoples and a sense of self satisfaction and attainment in their acquisition of language skills.

Dwelling for a moment on the matter of the grade-level starting point, I should like to say that we have begun instruction as low as Kindergarten and as high as 4H. Third and fourth grade pupils generate boundless enthusiasm and initiative; consequently, at this age more immediate and gratifying results are observed. There is a spirit of camaraderie, a penchant for acting, which manifests itself in a variety of surprisingly effective ways, even to include original skits and dialogues prepared by the children themselves within the scope of the language learned. In Richmond, since we ~~were~~ anxious to see direct results, our first essay was with the fourth grade groups. Naturally, our experiment is too young to permit us to say unequivocally the grade level that we have found to be the best point de départ. Perhaps it would be safe to venture that language teaching invested in third and fourth graders yields more immediate dividends, but that, in reality, the choice of grade level for beginning the learning of a language from the fourth grade down to kindergarten is of little importance, provided motivation is present and the proper language situation is set up. Satisfying results are being observed among kindergarten and first grade tots as well as among second grade children. It follows that here, since the pace must necessarily be slower, progress is not as rapid as it is in the case of third and fourth graders. The main thing is to start, let us say, in any grade from the fourth down to create in the very young an awareness of foreign tongues interlacing the peoples of the earth.

The organization of an elementary program of language instruction is beset with problems. However, since the rewards are legion, one should not dissent from engaging in a program geared to meet the needs of boys and girls, who, through their

language lessons, will realize that world society is complex, and that they, as future leaders, must have at their disposal significant means of preserving the ideals of democracy. Problems are presented, because teachers have to be located, and here it is essential to have properly qualified teachers. Sometimes the grade teacher is not the language teacher, and schedules have to be adjusted to accommodate both the language and the grade teacher. Most of our classes meet twice a week for twenty to thirty minutes; a few meet three times a week; and some sections receive daily instruction for a shorter period of time. Continuity is important, and often a grade teacher does not move to an advanced grade, and then more adjustments become necessary. But, with time and patience, and above all, enthusiasm, most of the difficulties can be overcome to make for smooth progress.

Indeed, the task of locating the qualified and fluent teacher is the bête noire of the elementary plan. Because of the initial success of our experiment, interest in language learning leads us to believe that we could very easily expand the program to include many additional schools. It is better, we think, to proceed slowly and cautiously, to concentrate on these six schools, to offer experimentally a continuity of learning, as far as this is possible, and thus to measure success, than it is to offer French and Spanish in all of our elementary schools before there is a sufficient number of teachers fluent in the languages to handle the situation. If and when French and Spanish, and possibly German, are made available to all children of any or all grade levels, this move must be preceded by definite plans for the preparation of teachers.

In our experiment we have encouraged the participation of elementary teachers, qualified in languages, and here, I am happy to say, their training has far exceeded our expectations. A language trained elementary teacher has an advantage over a language teacher who visits a class two or three times a week to offer instruction. The elementary teacher can visualize work in English, Arithmetic, Social Studies, Art, Music, and in other subjects through the medium of the modern language. She has the opportunity of encouraging the practice of the language on innumerable occasions during the day so that spontaneity is acquired to such an extent by the pupil that expression in the foreign language, within the scope of words and phrases learned, becomes as automatic as his ability to converse in his mother tongue. I have been in a 2L classroom, enthralled with the eager participation of children in their work with numbers. Following the teacher's directions in French, groups of five or six pupils have proceeded to the blackboard, taken a piece of chalk, and written their numbers proudly and correctly. Meanwhile, the other children, anxious to display their knowledge of French, were practically on the edge of their benches, with hands raised in happy anticipation of being called on next!

It follows that, if the teaching of languages is going to be made available universally to children in the elementary grades, teachers must be graduated from colleges with language skills. Already there are indications that Virginia colleges are alerted to the need. I understand that one or two colleges are offering pertinent courses, and I believe that others may be contemplating a similar move. Westhampton College, of the University of Richmond, is assisting this semester by lending us three outstanding language students, who are serving as apprentice teachers under the supervision of the language or elementary teacher and the Supervisor of Foreign Languages. In one school, a parent, a former French teacher, has volunteered her services. Several high school language pupils who have younger brothers or sisters benefiting from the elementary program in languages, are voicing a real interest in pursuing the teaching profession. Indeed, we language teachers must not leave one stone unturned in our efforts to interest high school and college students in entering the field of teaching.

In the controlled language set-up in the elementary schools in Richmond, teachers are provided with Tentative Units, which form a basis for instruction. These Units are suggestive, not conclusive. Some of the material is original; part is taken by permission from the Guides of the Washington and Los Angeles schools. Records and tapes are used extensively and advantageously. Needless to say, we are constantly studying all available guides on the teaching of languages and have adapted and are continuing to adapt the best to our particular needs.

We have made no attempt to separate rapid learners from slow learners. In fact, in addition to arithmetic, teachers report a freshness of interest in reading as a result of the learning of French and Spanish. Pupils whose timidity contributes to making them unverbal, thus hindering their progress in English, take an active part in the language lesson, and as a result lose some of their shyness to the extent that they become verbal enough in the mother tongue to improve in their reading ability. Up to the present time the aural-oral method of instruction has been used. For the groups that started learning French and Spanish in the fall of 1952, we are planning, during the current semester, an introduction to reading and writing. Close supervision of our other classes is being made, and reading and writing will enter into their instruction as soon as these skills can be done with facility and interest. Possibly in the latter part of grade 8 a division will be made to separate pupils highly proficient in the language from the slow learners. To date, it is noteworthy that lack of participation on the part of pupils in learning French and Spanish has been negligible. After grade 8 the brighter pupils will follow a high school course designed to challenge their superior level of achievement. It may be expedient at this time to provide for slow learners a high school language program in conformity with their interests and

abilities. They, too, have a definite contribution to make to the scheme of general education and future citizenship.

In Richmond we are pleasantly excited about our unparalleled opportunities for unfolding before children the miracle of learning French and Spanish. Interest among parents and businessmen has been great, and comments from countless visitors from universities have been favorable. Natives from France and Cuba, who have seen the classes in action, have been pleased with the degree of accuracy these children have obtained in pronunciation. In the foreseeable future, all things point to continuance and expansion of this need. Our Superintendent, our Assistant Superintendent in charge of Instruction, as well as our Principals, ever eager to develop schools in relation to the potentialities of the students who are to become our citizens in the coming years, have given their wholehearted encouragement and assistance in this new approach. We are zealous to extend this phase of bilingual offerings, which must be done gradually.

Unquestionably, languages must be taught in the elementary grades, if we are going to live harmoniously and competitively in a world in which the people of other nations are linguistically equipped. This is a need too obvious to dwell upon. It is time that languages, not only French and Spanish, but other foreign tongues as well, are brought to the forefront, and are considered as necessary in general education as is the study of English. A program, once it is begun, gains momentum with unbelievable rapidity. These are not the days for inertia; these are the days for action, immediate action; these are the days when we, as language teachers, must be on the qui vive, observant of our unprecedented chance to serve our youth. Despite the lack of a sufficiently large number of fluent language teachers at the moment, and despite the possible deficiency of adequate funds to finance elementary language programs, let us begin with the resources at our command, let us march forward to attain our goal, confident that through consistent effort and the determination to achieve, we shall set an all-time high in the field of languages by putting the young men and the young women of our country in a better position to enjoy and to exercise the rights and liberties of world citizenship.

## An Experiment in Teaching French in the Training School

by Elizabeth Michael, Eastern Illinois State College

The way that I found myself launched into an experiment in teaching French in the Training School is quite ironic and amusing, to me at least. The Spring of 1952, just two years ago, I had a very serious conference with the Head of my Foreign Language Department, Dr. Kevin Guinagh. It seemed that there would not be enough college classes for me to teach the next year to make a full schedule. I was not worried about my job; I have tenure and am one of the so-called "Full Professors." BUT, I was worried about the prospect of having to teach English Composition to college Freshmen, or some other subject for which I was totally unprepared. So, I reminded Dr. Guinagh of the fact that for years Myrtle Arnold, Fourth Grade Critic, and one of my closest friends, had been wanting me to teach French to her children, but I had had too big a load to undertake such a project. "NOW," I said, "is the time to get some language work started in our grade school!" The machinery was set in motion and before MacGrath had opened his mouth to make his famous speech in St. Louis in May of that year, I was scheduled for French in the grade school for the coming Fall Quarter. Much to the delight of the Administrators and myself, we found that we were on the band wagon before it got off to a good start. It was just one of those things that happen now and then in our profession.

I can understand how a college professor might feel about the prospect of teaching a language to children. I was simply scared to death for weeks before school started that Fall. I had been teaching in the College, had had some years of teaching at the secondary level in our Laboratory School, but I had never taught children before. I knew that I liked children, but just suppose they might not like me! How awful that would be! And, goodness gracious, I had no textbook to fall back on. (I had absolutely no materials from which to get even an inkling of what I ought to do. Later, I discovered some excellent aids and to my great relief, found that others much more competent than I also started by using the same methods, the same vocabulary that I had stumbled upon.) After the first moment in that Fourth Grade room, all my fears vanished. Here were individuals who could appreciate and understand my own enthusiasm for the French language! Here was a response to language learning that I had never encountered in all of my twenty-three years of teaching French. Here was the challenge I had needed, the encouragement for which I had longed. These people were teachable! They simply ate it up! At the end of one class period, they had a perfect French "u" and the "r" was no problem at all! It was a revelation to me and one of the most heart-warming experiences I have ever had. Much to my surprise, after that first lesson, I was greeted on the campus by these children with "Bonjour, Mademoiselle." I had never paid much attention to the children wandering about on our campus, but now I had to be very careful

not to miss some child who was trying to greet me, often from a considerable distance. I assure you, the greetings in French before that time had been few and far between. It was not long before college students and professors were fully aware that French was being taught on our campus. The response was truly magnificent. Parents were delighted and many of the fathers were on our staff, so I got immediate reports from them on how the children were teaching their little brothers and sisters, how they were talking French to the family pets, how children were seen playing hide-and-seek on the campus and counting in French. The gym teacher said that every game from the time the numbers were learned had to be counted in French. Reports are still coming in on how the music practice is always counted in French, etc. These responses were genuinely appreciated. In a few months' time, I heard more comment on my teaching of French than I had heard before in all the years I had been on the campus. The compensations more than made up for the extra time that I was soon putting in on my job. I have never worked harder than I have since I started this project; but I have never felt so much like putting everything I have into my job.

What did we accomplish that first year? Well, it went much like this in the fourth grade. A French greeting first of all; then the French alphabet and the Alphabet Song; then French names or a French pronunciation of the English name; objects in the class-room (in great detail); games with the children acting the part of Professor. I had planned to teach the numbers late in the first quarter, but before three weeks had passed someone said that he thought we should learn to count NOW, so lesson plans were scrapped (as they often must be when some child asks to learn something right away quick) and we started to learn numbers. There was no thought on my part of going beyond twenty, or thirty at the most, but the class insisted on going higher and higher; each day they could hardly wait to add new numbers. By this time they were sending each other to the board to write numbers and the higher they could go, the more fun it was. The climax came for me on the day the son of the Head of our Mathematics Department sent a pal to the board to write 1,999,666. The class learned immediately to do the arithmetical processes in French, and the critic teacher was overjoyed to have many a French period turn into an Arithmetic class. The extra drill in number combinations using the flash cards was profitable in more ways than one. I think they enjoyed arithmetic more than any other thing we did, except the giving of commands. That simply was the greatest sport they had ever dreamed of, and all kinds of commands were learned during the year. The class learned the parts of the body very rapidly and by April 9, when we did our first demonstration for our County Principals' Association, they were able to present the play, Toto est Malade. For a High School Assembly and for a demonstration in June at an Elementary Principals' Workshop in session on our campus, they did a very much simplified version of Little Red Ridinghood. By the end of the year they knew the days of the week, the months,

how to give the date, the hour, their age, the members of their family, etc. I have thirty minutes five times a week with this class, or I never should have accomplished so much. This grade also asked me in the spring to give them the names of the birds they had been identifying in a unit of work. By that time, I was wise enough to ask them to hand me a list of birds so that I could prepare it at home! I still have not found the French name for certain birds, such as scarlet tanager, cedar waxwing, snow bunting, and crested flycatcher.

I was delighted to have an equal amount of time last year with the sixth grade. I found a very different situation and a different response to language in that grade. It was not so easy to imitate the sounds which the teacher was making; they were much happier when something was written on the board, or when they were given mimeographed sheets to look at. I went into this grade with the understanding that I would cooperate with their unit in the Social Studies, which was a study of France. So, we started out with simple geographical material with sentences given first for comprehension, repeated by the class, written on the board and copied into notebooks. They were soon answering questions on this material in French and were delighted with true-false statements and with sending each other to the map to locate places. This grade also learned much of the material given to the fourth grade. I translated the instructions sent by the International Red Cross. Several interesting class periods were spent, with each student telling what he was planning to bring to be included in the gift boxes and what he should like to receive were he on the other end. This class had a unit on "How the Body Works." This gave a chance to add to the list of the parts of the body, and the pupils were intrigued by the teacher's translation of rather complicated sentences which had already been used in English. They were pleased and amazed at the similarity of the medical vocabulary in the two languages. These people loved to talk about sports and named (in conversations simple but lively) their favorite sports and sports figures. They asked to have vocabularies of flowers and birds in the spring and told what their favorites were. They were very musical and wanted a list of musical instruments. This provided conversations about the instrument each child could play, what instrument he would like to play, etc. This grade was interested in French food and loved to dramatize the setting of the table and the ordering of a meal in a French restaurant.

Before I leave the experiences of last year, I must tell you of an incident which was interesting, to me, at least. Two of the fourth grade girls worked out a skit, Charles et Marie, using the puppets which one of them, an extremely shy little girl, had received from Germany. They were practicing for their demonstration performance one day in class when I noticed that they were using a script. I knew that they could not write a word of the language, so I was most curious to what

might be written on that paper. Examination of it revealed that the entire dialogue was written there in English. The girls had been speaking much too fluently to say that they were merely translating. I awoke with a start to the fact that here was evidence perhaps of a developing bilingualism!

This fall quarter, I continued French in the fifth and seventh grades and started a new fourth grade, just to prove that it was an ideal age at which to begin a language, and also to prove that the amazing progress of last year had not been due to the unusual intelligence of the group. I have twenty-five minutes four times a week in the fourth and seventh grades and five times a week with the fifth grade.

I have continued to be delighted with the experiment, especially since I am so fortunate this year as to have a student teacher with me. Donald McKee is receiving credit for his practice teaching in the fourth grade and is auditing the work in the other grades with a chance now and then to try teaching at these different age levels. We are the only Teachers College in Illinois offering practice teaching in languages at the elementary level. For that, I am truly grateful, for it seems to me that the Teachers Colleges have a grave responsibility--to prepare teachers trained in this comparatively new field. We are at least making a start at Charleston.

I am fortunate to have this young man who, although he had never taught a day before last fall, is one of the most original teachers I have ever seen. He has taken full responsibility for the fourth grade for several months and even gave a demonstration last week for a meeting of the ACE group on our campus. It was a thrilling evening. Parents were also present and were amazed at the number of words the children could use in a variety of situations. (We figure that they know about 150 words, not counting the numerals from one to one hundred.) This student teacher is very clever at drawing and has given many fine lessons introducing new vocabulary by means of freehand drawing, a thing I should give a great deal to be able to do myself! He has introduced the parts of the body and clothing in great detail, using at least twelve different techniques. These children are not as fond of giving commands as were those of last year, but they love to order a meal in French. We tried writing the French name under the picture of certain fruits and vegetables, and to our great surprise found that the children were dividing themselves up during free periods as teacher and pupil and were helping each other learn the words. This made it possible for several of the slower pupils to shine in class the next day when they successfully identified at least ten items. The class was doing a Deep-Sea unit early in the year and asked me the name for squid. I did not know it, being only remotely acquainted with fish in English. I find that one

does not lose face with children; not when one is scrupulously honest with them. They do not expect me to know every word in the French language! So, they nicely gave me a list of the words they wanted to know: sail-fish, shark, sword-fish, porpoise, barracuda, saw-fish, octopus.

The perfect climax of our demonstration the other night came after Mr. McKee told them he did not think they could remember a word or two which they had had early in the year and he asked, "Où est le plafond? Où est le plancher?" Without a single exception, they all pointed correctly, using "Voilà," and trigger fast one little fellow spoke up, "We dood it!" The audience agreed heartily.

In the fifth grade, the children were delighted to be going on with their French and would have been perfectly happy to go on indefinitely giving commands, but agreed with me that it would seem very silly not to learn any other form of the verb. I wanted them to begin to see words and sentences, so early we listed all the objects in the classroom which they had learned last year. I noticed that some of them were not too happy when I gave the command to take out the notebooks; they thought it was perfectly silly, for they KNEW those words! Just the right motivation was given for notebook work when we had two charming German teachers visit our class in October. They were asked after the lesson to tell us how they teach English to the fifth grade pupils in Germany and they began describing the exact procedure which we had been using. My pupils beamed at me. THEN the German girls said that their children just loved to keep workbooks and write in them, for they knew that one must learn to read and write the language as well as to speak it. I capitalized on that remark the next day. The pupils were writing some sentences. One boy expressed the general feeling of the class when he looked up at me and said "Gee, Mademoiselle, we just LOVE to write this stuff." (I almost fainted.) There have been no murmurs since; in fact, some of them asked if they might not write the numbers from one to one hundred. I cannot guarantee that they all can write the numbers and spell them correctly right now, but at least they have the list in their notebooks.

Early in the year I showed them that they really did know how to read many things. I wrote on the blackboard commands which they particularly enjoyed, and asked them to do what the board told them to do. They were proud of their success and of the fact that reading is really so easy. They liked writing commands on slips of paper, putting them in a hat or a cap, coming to the front to draw a command, read it to the class, and do what they were told to do.

The comprehension in this class is remarkable. I can read a story to them, ask them questions and they can answer

beautifully. Then I give my book to a member of the class and he reads the same thing for the class. They love to go on in the story to new sentences which they have not heard before. They need help at times, to be sure, but there are some who can usually read anything in Colette et ses Frères, or Totor et Tristan.

These pupils were to see an exhibit of Grandma Moses' paintings in our Art Gallery. We talked about the vocabulary they would need to discuss these paintings in French and learned quite a few necessary words from a print which I showed them. Our French class came immediately after this visit and we talked about what they had seen; we named a favorite picture and asked one of the artists in the class to draw a picture frame on the board and draw in the object of this favorite picture which each member of the class would suggest. I thought the reproductions were far superior to the originals and so did the delighted art teacher who stayed for French class that day.

At Hallowe'en, I read the story, La Citrouille, from the Spink and Millis French Storybook Grammar. The Art teacher had them illustrate the story and label the drawings with a French sentence. These illustrations were hung from the ceiling, or the lights, and were very colorful and interesting.

At Christmas time we talked about French customs, learned how to write the greeting and arranged a huge vocabulary of items which go into the building of a crèche. They seemed to enjoy the religious aspect of the French Christmas. I translated for them the delightful story Noël for Jeanne-Marie, by Françoise (Charles Scribner's). The beautiful illustrations in this book gave much scope to the conversation.

When the Music Contests came along this spring, the class asked for a list of musical instruments. They have had fun with a spelling-bee, using these words and naming the instruments which each one would insist on having in his band.

These pupils use the er verb most adequately, although they have not studied the other classes of verbs. They know how to write sentences with some verbs like être, avoir, and aller. They have not written the past tense, although they are learning to use it; the future is still aller with the infinitive.

In the seventh grade, we did a good review at first and early started to play Twenty Questions. This has also become a favorite sport with the fifth grade, but it is most interesting to see how much farther the seventh grade wants to carry the game. The critic teacher is highly gratified to see them choosing historical characters, or places, or incidents which they have been studying in Social Science class. This

game is one of the best ways to motivate the adding of new sentences, new vocabulary. They are always coming to us to find out how to say something new. We also used some of the lessons of the Ernst and Levy, Leçons Préliminaires, with this group. They helped the pronunciation greatly, but the material was too elementary. Then we made up conversations which they memorized. Now we are using the Lindquist, French for Daily Use, and the class is perfectly happy. This grade loves anything that is a competitive game and I have never seen such enthusiasm for writing verbs as we have when they can divide into teams and see which can write the most verbs in the fastest time. Naturally, we always comment on the art work found in each room and use it for conversational material, for colors, congratulations, etc.

I cannot go into our use of songs and audio-visual aids. We use them copiously.

Where do we go from here? I hope to take these three grades through the ninth year with us. I had hoped to be able to take them all through our Laboratory High School and from there into college, but our State Board has recently decreed that our High School will be discontinued in July of 1955. I am sure they were not thinking of my experiment when they dealt this blow.

I should like to make one plea. I feel that we are desperately in need of elementary texts and materials geared to the child of today. Most of the materials I have found are adequate for the fourth grade, but they fail miserably in the fifth grade. Our children are so accustomed to being highly entertained by television that they are quite bored unless even the simplest story builds up to a beautiful climax with a real punch at the end. I have had to add this punch to most of the stories that I use with the fifth grade. This is a challenge to those who know the language best. Why not build vocabularies of special interest which the children could use? They should love to be able to play outdoor games in French. I have not been able to find anything of this nature to give them. I contemplate with pleasure spending part of my time in France this summer gathering suitable materials--for a book, perhaps. I should prefer that a native French person do it, however.

I, who work with these children every day, find myself at times taking the situation for granted. I have only to give a demonstration, only to have a visitor walk into the room, to see the amazed expression on faces as the children show what they can do, to make it all seem fresh and amazing to me. It is truly a thrilling experience to watch children use the language after so little time with it. It is indeed the most rewarding teaching that I have ever done and I

recommend it most enthusiastically to anyone who has struggled with the beginning college courses in French. I often wonder why I spent so many years trying to INSIST that college students learn to speak a foreign language.

Materials I have found of most use:

Patterson, Mes Premières Leçons de Français, 18 Beverly Place, Dayton 9, Ohio.

Spink and Millis, French Storybook Grammar, Ginn and Co.

" " " Colette et ses Frères

" " " Totor et Tristan

" " " Aventures de la Famille Gautier  
(contemplate using this next year in  
the sixth grade.)

White, A Guide for the Teaching of French in the  
Elementary Schools, District of Columbia.

" Course of Study, Juvenile French I, II, Cleveland  
Public Schools.

Ernst and Levy, Leçons Préliminaires, (recordings and  
script), Holt.

O'Brien and LaFrance, Beginning French, Ginn and Co.

E. Saxelby, Coquerico, Ginn and Co.

Wellek and Bass, Rire et Apprendre, Ungar, (105 East 24th  
Street, New York 10, N.Y.)

Wellek, Paul et Marie à l'Ecole.

The Teaching of Spanish in the Elementary Grades  
by Carlos Rivera, El Paso (Texas) Public Schools

Spanish in the First Grade

On September 14, 1951, Dr. Mortimer Brown, superintendent of the El Paso public schools, called me into his office to discuss the teaching of Spanish in El Paso. Recognizing the need and practical value of teaching Spanish to the English-speaking child, I accepted the offer to undertake the experiment.

The program as set forth by Dr. Brown was that I was to be a guest in the first grade classes of predominantly English-speaking students for fifteen to twenty minutes twice a week, speaking only in Spanish to them in an informal way. They were not to see the written Spanish word. The classroom teacher was to remain in the room during the visit. There were to be no tests and the students and teachers were not to be forced in any way to speak Spanish; I was to develop their interest and their desire to speak the language, and it was up to me to develop a means of communication in Spanish with these children, some of whom had never heard a word of Spanish.

On the first day that I walked into the classroom, since we were utilizing real situations around the experiences of first grade children, the most natural thing to do was become acquainted. This first unit, then, I entitled, "Get Acquainted Day." When I knocked at the door, I repeated several times, "Pase usted," but did not enter. I made motions indicating that I would not enter until the children said, "Pase usted." I repeated the act of knocking at the door and entering upon the children's "Pase usted," until there was no doubt that the phrase meant to them an invitation to enter.

I greeted them: "Buenos días, niños." No response. I went back to the door, entered, and shook hands with several children, repeating the greeting. I then greeted the classroom teacher (who had a copy of the lesson in English), who answered as best she could. The children then caught the spirit of the phrase and answered in unison, "Buenos días, señor Rivera." In similar fashion, by means of gestures and utilizing the classroom teacher, the children followed through the usual greeting question of, "¿Cómo están ustedes?" with the answer, "Muy bien, gracias." Few of the children knew the sequence of the questions and answers to the greeting; by repetition they automatically answered as a group. Little by little, however, each one individually has learned to answer my knock at the door with a hearty handshake, a smile, and a "Pase usted, señor Rivera." Each one can answer individually in the halls and on the playgrounds the customary greeting of the morning or the afternoon.

The next step in getting acquainted the first day was to give our names. I pointed to myself and said, "Me llamo el señor Rivera, a sus órdenes." The class learned right away that whenever I said, "digan" they were to repeat whatever I was saying. By my repeating, "Me llamo el señor Rivera," the class became aware that I must have been saying my name. The classroom had name plates of each child on his table. By pointing to the name and repeating it in a phrase, "Me llamo Nancy, a sus órdenes," the children learned to answer the question, "¿Cómo se llama usted?" as well as to ask it of me.

This first experience was accomplished in fifteen minutes in each of the twenty-five classes I visited during the first week, and for two weeks we did nothing but exchange greetings and names.

The success of the experiment has been due, to a certain extent, to the integration of Spanish with the course of study in the first grade. The child's family and home are known experiences at that age, and the center of his attention. With this thought in mind then, a unit of the family was introduced during the third week. By means of magazine pictures, flashed as each member of the family was introduced, the children soon learned to associate the Spanish word and the picture. At no time during the experiment was an isolated word given: it is the Spanish phrase and sentence that are emphasized. The picture of el papá evolved into, "Este es mi papá," and later into "Mi papá se llama el señor Smith." El hermano of the picture immediately became, "Yo tengo un hermano," and "Mi hermano se llama Dick." Numerals from one to ten were introduced during the first week so that by the third week the children were able to say, "Yo tengo dos hermanos" or (hermanas), when asked, "¿Cuántos hermanos tiene usted?"

Colors were introduced along with numbers, so that when the picture of the dog or cat was introduced the children could say, "Tengo un perro negro," or "Tengo dos gatos blancos." Once the colors were definitely established in the minds of the children, they were greatly amused when asked, "¿Quién tiene un perro verde?" or "¿Quién tiene un gato azul?" Without realizing that they were conjugating verbs, the children shifted easily from "Yo tengo un hermano" to "Mi mamá tiene un nene" when the picture of the baby flashed. In a very short time the child learned to distinguish between verbs used for speaking about himself and those for speaking about a third person. As the vocabulary increased and more verbs entered into their conversation, they readily detected that difference without the necessity of drilling isolated verbs.

In teaching a language one must not forget that one "builds up" on known vocabulary. Constant repetition of vocabulary, phrases, and sentences is an important factor for the first

grader who is learning Spanish "by ear." All new vocabulary is tied somehow to that previously learned. The vocabulary for the members of the family was related to that of the "Get Acquainted" unit. The children learned to answer the question, "¿Cómo está su papá (mamá, hermano, hermana, etc.)?" with "Mi papá está muy bien, gracias." They learned to say, "Mi mamá se llama la señora Jones," and "Mi familia está muy bien."

Adjectives had been used all along in sentences, but in the unit on the outside of the house they played an important part. All of the objects in front of the house were described as bonito, pequeño, or grande. From the outside of the house we proceeded into each room, beginning with the living room and ending with the bathroom. Children enjoy enacting scenes and playing roles. Sometimes el papá would answer the make-believe front door with a "Buenos días; pase usted." The child playing the role of the guest would find himself in an imaginary living room. By means of pictures, the Spanish names, el sofá, el sillón, la mesita con una lámpara, la alfombra, and la ventana con cortinas were learned. Colors and numerals again entered into the daily conversation as the children described their own furniture: "En mi sala hay dos sillones rojos y un sofá verde." Freehand drawings of the various pieces of furniture were made in different colors and designs, and finally a mimeographed living room with all the furniture was colored by the children. The technique of coloring and drawing has been used over and over again in every unit presented. Children enjoy coloring, and in teaching a language to children it is important to correlate the eye, the ear, and the "feeling" of the object until they can associate the spoken word with that object.

In the unit on the dining room the children learned to set the table and to serve. The appeal of the experiment to the first graders has been the emphasis on real life situations in which they can participate. In picking the children to play the roles of the various members of the family, we had learned the Spanish version of "Eenie-Meenie-Miny-Mo" so that different children had an opportunity to participate in the setting and serving of the table. The mamá would set the table as the class indicated what she was setting (a child's set of dishes became part of the teaching equipment): "Mamá pone el mantel; mamá pone cuatro platos," and so on. In the meantime, the rest of the family would be in the "living room." I would knock at the puerta and the hijo would welcome me into the house, introduce me to the members of the family, and at that precise moment the mamá would enter and ask us into the dining room. By the aid of pictures of the various foods, we were served a complete desayuno, comida, or cena. To enable the children to retain as much of the vocabulary as possible, again freehand drawings of table settings, fruits, vegetables, and other foods for the three meals were drawn by the students.

Once the foods were learned it was a simple step to place la mamá in the kitchen taking out the food from the refrigerator and preparing it on la estufa. After the meal she would wash the dishes in the sink, wash and iron, or clean the house. Reviews at this stage were very frequent: mamá would always serve in the dining room all the meals she prepared in the kitchen, to guests and members of the family sitting in the living room. In this manner, a sequence was kept in the relationship of one room to another.

About the time we were ready to move on, mamá prepared el desayuno and called the family down from their bedrooms. The interest then shifted to bedroom furniture and bed clothes, going to bed, sleeping, and getting up. Again by means of pictures, along with miniature bedroom sets, the vocabulary was drilled and repeated.

But one more step was necessary to send the different members of the family about their duties: they had to use the bathroom. The bathroom fixtures and use of them by the family were introduced. We brushed our teeth in class, using el cepillo para los dientes; we washed las manos y la cara before going to bed and upon getting up; nos secamos con una toalla; nos peinamos. Then each member of the family did the same before going to bed and in the morning.

Once the children were "washed and ready for school," a unit on clothing came naturally because the family was ready to be dressed. We dressed ourselves, dressed the members of the family to send them out of the house, cut out clothes for paper dolls, and dressed the members of the family.

The next step in keeping with the first grade course of study was to send the family on a vacation, al rancho. Most first graders study a unit on the farm. We close our first year of Spanish by going to the farm and learning about the animals in Spanish.

The teaching of Spanish in the first grade has been as natural a method as has been possible. We have striven to keep within the naturalness of learning one's own native language. All along, the visits in each classroom have been casual and informal. Interest and anticipation from one lesson to another have been kept to a maximum by the variety of methods used in presenting pictures, drawings, colorings, objects, games, and dramatizations, and by relating Spanish to the children's own experiences in and out of the classroom. By the end of the first year the children became familiar with at least 650 Spanish words and phrases, not counting songs, numerals from one to one hundred, and vocabulary relating to holidays. There have been fifteen units presented, three of which have been on rhymes and songs. Each lesson plan has all

the vocabulary needed to present the particular unit complete, but actual retention by the children has been along the line of essential vocabulary needed to understand and identify objects, talk about them in relation to one another, and use in idiomatic expressions. The emphasis has been on the training of the ear of the child who has never heard Spanish and the retaining by the child of the essential vocabulary needed for practical conversation. The first year was designed for listening and ear training, emphasizing group participation and repetition of words and phrases relative to pictures flashed before the children. The children have learned "by ear" the association of the word to the picture, and there have been no translations given at any time.

#### Spanish in the Second Grade

When we were ready to expand the Spanish program into the second grade, a course of study in Spanish was devised, based on the first year's work. A thorough review of all material presented in the first grade was included, unifying related topics into units. Whereas fifteen units had been presented in the first grade, only nine units comprised all the material for the review in the second grade. New vocabulary was introduced incidentally into the review and the greater part of it was understood by the children through context and relation to known vocabulary. This review took a period of fourteen weeks, since time was allowed for seatwork that accompanied each unit. Practical expressions relative to names and greetings, the family as a whole, parents, brothers and sisters, the house with all the rooms, the back yard and the garden of the house, relatives, and farm animals were included in these units.

By the time the seven-year-old child approaches the last half of the second grade, after a year and a half of Spanish, it is advisable to allow time for individual self-expression in the Spanish class period. Up to now most of the recitation has been done by the entire group; as the Spanish teacher has asked questions about an object, the entire group has answered. Gradually more and more individual responses are encouraged. Should the child answer incorrectly, or hesitate, correction is made by the teacher's announcing the correct answer and having the entire class repeat it. For the purpose of encouraging individual response on the part of the children, units for growth in the language were introduced, again based on known experiences of the average second-grader. Correlation and integration with the second-year course of study afforded a variety of topics for class discussions: the second-grader is now becoming conscious of his school environment, holidays, the changes of the season, and his community helpers. These topics

were introduced during the last half of the second grade in eight units, inter-related in some sequence, and including the family sending the children off to school, the children crossing the street on their way and arriving at the school, the classroom, activities in the classroom, introduction of important holidays during the course of the year, such as el Día de la Raza (Columbus' Day), el Día de Gracias (Thanksgiving Day), la Navidad (Christmas), el Cumpleaños (The Birthday), el Día Panamericano (Pan-American Day), la Pascua (Easter) and el Día de la Madre (Mother's Day).

In the first and second grades, holidays play an important part in the classroom activities of the children. Integration of the teaching of Spanish with the activities of holidays lends itself easily, since these activities are done in English by the classroom teacher and in Spanish by the Spanish teacher during the Spanish class period. The children enjoy, therefore, identical experiences in **both** languages: the concepts of the holiday at hand are established in the minds of the children from the classroom activities conducted in English, making it an enjoyable activity when presenting the holiday in Spanish. Most of these activities in Spanish consist of coloring drawings prepared beforehand or creating symbolic representations depicting the holiday to be treated. The vocabulary is incidental to the activity. Songs usually play an important role, and although the children may not remember the practical vocabulary presented with each holiday, repetition of these activities through several years in the language study of the child will make this vocabulary a part of his living experience.

Most second grade courses of study devote a great period of time to the study of community helpers. By the time the seven-year-old child is in the second grade he is familiar with at least the most common of the community helpers. At this time, in order to tie-in Spanish with the second grade course of study, a unit on community helpers was presented in Spanish. The presentation of community helpers toward the close of the second grade work afforded a **review** of previously learned vocabularies and introduction to new words and phrases relative to the work of the community helpers. However, the task of presenting an altogether new material is spared the Spanish teacher since this material is all known in English to the second-grader. Such community helpers as el cartero (the mailman), el bombero (the fireman), el lechero (the milkman), and el policía (the policeman) provided practical vocabulary along known experiences of the second grade child and motivated interest in learning in Spanish the material presented previously in English by the second grade teacher.

Toward the middle of the second grade, children begin to learn the months of the year and the seasons. Up to now the months and seasons had been mentioned casually in Spanish, at

the beginning of each month and season. The children have continued to indicate the weather on their classroom weather chart. The Spanish teacher had commented on the type of weather on that particular day and had capitalized on unusual weather for classroom discussion. However, at this time, since the children in second grade have learned the seasons and months, integration is made possible by a follow-up in Spanish with a unit on climatic conditions pertaining to the months of the year.

During the second year of Spanish, there are no translations; all subjects for conversation are introduced by means of pictures and realia. After certain phases of units were discussed, related seatwork was given in Spanish to serve as a review and to assure the Spanish teacher that the class had comprehended the material and that the children were "thinking in Spanish," when carrying out directions. Repetitions and drills assure results in learning a language. The teacher provided frequent practice periods in which the class participated as a group or as individuals. Toward the end of the year, the children were writing the titles of their seatwork in Spanish, following the Spanish teacher's pronunciation as she divided words into syllables. This is the first step toward reading and writing in Spanish in the third grade.

Singing has played an important part in the teaching of Spanish in the second grade. The songs and games learned in the first year of Spanish have been repeated during this year. New songs, appropriate to the children's age, have been introduced. Finger games of the first grade have been replaced by action songs and games as the children have developed. Simple Mexican dances have been enjoyed by the classes, thereby adding to the understanding of the culture of the people whose language they are studying.

The teaching of Spanish to English-speaking children in the first and second grades during the first two years of the program in El Paso has been as challenging as at the beginning of the experiment. Interest and enthusiasm have been kept as high as in the first day's teaching, and although almost all of the children suspect that the Spanish teachers speak English, the habit of speaking Spanish to the teachers is so well founded that they do not address them in English at any time for information. School principals and classroom teachers have been most co-operative, and parents are enthusiastic about the language potentials of their children, delighted at the language opportunity given them. Adult classes have doubled in enrollment under the Adult Educational Program, and classes for the mothers of children learning Spanish have begun in many of the schools under the sponsorship of the Parent-Teachers' Association. And since the first television station was set up in El Paso in December, 1953, television classes have been conducted for thirty minutes twice a week, thereby reaching the homes of over 15,000 listeners and making Spanish a part of the family and daily living.

The El Paso program now includes the third grade, where children are beginning to read and write, and with the help of five assistants, we reach 17 schools, teaching over 4,000 children in the first, second, and third grades.

Our plans are to continue expanding the Spanish program one year at a time until the entire elementary grade level is covered.

## I Have Taught a Foreign Language in Elementary Grades

by Virginia Roe, Holmes High School, Covington, Kentucky

Just one year ago in a city Gymnasium for boys in Hamm, Westphalia, a wide-awake German youth came before the faculty for his oral exams, not knowing in which subjects he would take them. He had already passed the written finals in all classes. He was handed a copy of Prime Minister Atlee's speech on the death of the Mahatma Gandhi, and was given about fifteen minutes to read it over. Then he arose, retold the piece in fluent, flawless English, and discussed it. He was asked several discussion questions concerning India, which he answered in the same style. An amazed and admiring American language teacher sat with the faculty, pondering how such results had been achieved. His English teacher assured me that the student had no previous knowledge of the article nor did he know that he would be asked about India, and stated also that he was neither the best nor the poorest in his class. His performance would have been commendable if it had been done in his own language. But he did it in a foreign tongue.

It is my sole purpose this morning to describe something of the program which is capable of producing such results.

The school is a preparatory one; perhaps most of the graduates will attend a university. The boys have had four years of elementary training before entering, and they are a select group. They begin the study of either English or Latin in their first year there, at the age of ten or eleven, and two years later the study of the other. The Gymnasium offers a course of nine years, so that those who graduate have had nine years of Latin and seven of English, or vice versa. In the last three or four years, the study of French may be taken up. This school is the mathematical scientific higher school of the city. There is also a classical school, and a modern language school, where more attention is paid to language. The Germans believe a student should have a thorough training in language as a basis for understanding the context of professional courses in the university.

The periods are forty-five minutes each for all classes--much too long for ten-year-olds, and too short for the upper grades.

Several weeks elapse before a textbook for beginners is used. There is endless repetition of short sentences and pronunciation drills each day for six days a week. Because the classes are large, usually numbering fifty, some work is done in unison. The work proceeds very slowly at first, but very thoroughly. The youngsters seemingly do not tire of the repetition and their interest and enthusiasm surpass by far all that I have ever found in classes beginning with the eleventh grade in my school. It is much easier to promote interest along any line in the lower grades.

These young Germans were delighted to say a short English sentence and be answered whenever I met them anywhere outside of class. Their speech was far from correct sometimes, but in every case understandable. Even boys who were not in my classes liked to say "Good-day, Madam," and be greeted in return. Those who were only in their second year wanted to converse in English when we walked to school together. I spent four or five hours occasionally visiting art exhibits or castles or places of historic interest with upper class men. They, too, would speak in English the whole time, partly, I think, because they felt they were being courteous, but chiefly because of an eagerness to improve.

In their second year of English they dramatize stories in their text without any help from the teacher. They love plays, games, and dialogues. They care not a whit for donning aprons or ribbons and taking girls' parts. They are fond of poetry and love to sing. The cardboard-covered texts, less than one inch thick, are used two years, and are literally committed to memory. In the second year the boys are already able to understand and retell a short story remarkably well if there are no new or unexplained words. In later grades the response is a little less spontaneous, a little more self-conscious; there is a little less eagerness and more fear of making a mistake. But the selection goes on every year, the discipline is very strict, so most of them study very hard. There is some little use made of the small blackboard and not much written work done in class. The spelling lessons are oral for the most part. Eight or more important tests are given each year, which are written in copy books and kept in the office. Much value is put upon them. A great deal of copying is done at home and some exercise-writing. All is with ink. No exercise is written which has not been thoroughly practiced in class, so home work has few mistakes. Tests are usually dictation or reproduction, and perfection is the goal. Both poetry and prose of the text are memorized.

The school has a guest-friendship with a school in Yorkshire. Every year 25 or 30 students visit the English school for three weeks and are visited in turn. This provides motivation and stimulates a great deal of interest. There is a daily program of simple English lessons on the radio. A chart or schedule of these programs is kept before the school by means of a bulletin board. The older pupils listen to the American Forces Network and the B. B. C. Some are endeavoring to lose their British accent and are imitating the American.

In my upper classes original conversations were carried on, speeches made about hobbies, future vocations, etc.; oral reports were made on articles read. These young men might come to America or go to England and get around with no speech difficulties. The whole program has the oral approach. The reading done is not extensive, but thorough.

My experience last year has shown me:

1. The results are much better when a pupil begins early, goes slowly, and is thorough.
2. The price for mastery is endless practice and repetition.
3. Not all students can master a second language. Even in a select group, many failed last year because of inability to keep up.

We have in our country many difficulties to overcome if we ever have an extensive language program in our elementary grades. There is no time to discuss the successful attempts here in America which I have read about, nor Dr. Sauzé's Cleveland Plan with which I have some first-hand acquaintance. We do not have now a supply of foreign language teachers comparable to the teachers of English whom I met in Germany last year. I doubt if either our teachers or our pupils will be willing to put forth the effort that is needed, for it was no easy barrier that was set up at the tower of Babel. There is no easy way, and I fear that the public will expect too much. One present objection to foreign language study by the public is that our students may slave over a period of two years and still not be able to carry on a simple conversation with the natives of some other land. The public should learn that it is going to take more time, and that the results pay off in this modern era of radio, travel, and T. V. I fear that teachers will find the drill work deadening in the lower grades, even though pupils do not. I found this one of the most difficult and tiring phases of teaching I have ever experienced. The regular teachers disliked foreign language teaching in the lower grades.

It would certainly increase American prestige abroad if our representatives in a foreign land could speak concisely and correctly without an interpreter. It would be a great help if we could even speak our own tongue well. Europeans are necessarily more language-conscious than we, and more is expected of them, but we would be ashamed of some of our countrymen abroad, could we see how they compare in conferences and meetings. When other nations desire to capture foreign trade, many times they learn the speech and customs of the country in prospect. We lose trade by expecting business to be done our way and in our tongue. Arab businessmen in Hamm spoke fluent German.

I would not recommend in its entirety the program and methods of the German schools for us, because I believe it fosters class distinction to some degree. The masses are improving, as everywhere in free countries, and the educated complain that financially they are no longer so superior as formerly. But I do believe that if our language program began just as early in the child's school life as possible, it would be much more effective. I believe if we spread our present high school efforts over more years and were more thorough, we should have better results than we have now.

## The Teaching of Languages in the Elementary Schools

by Evelyn Van Eenenaam, Cooley High School, Detroit, Michigan

What a year 1953 has been! In innumerable ways we witnessed the results of man's ever-increasing ingenuity. We saw, we shared, we scheduled.

If you have been reading the various language publications during the eventful year just passed, you have a record of some of the great strides made in elementary school language work in our country.

Yes, what a year 1953 has been! What about 1954?

In dealing with this subject in a general way, we must necessarily mention some facts which by now must appear well known to the language teaching profession. The big impetus to the elementary school foreign language work came from a paper read by the former United States Commissioner of Education, Dr. Earl J. McGrath (now president of Kansas City University), at the thirty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association in St. Louis, Missouri, May 2, 1952. Dr. McGrath suggested that as many American elementary school children as possible be given the opportunity to begin the study of a modern foreign language.

A second impetus resulted from the first nationwide Conference on the Role of Modern Languages in American Schools, sponsored by the United States Office of Education, still under the direction of Dr. Earl J. McGrath, in Washington, D. C., January 15 and 16, 1953, which brought together persons of diverse educational and lay interests.

The third impetus to the study of modern foreign languages in our elementary schools resulted from a \$120,000 grant made by the Rockefeller Foundation to the Modern Language Association of America for a three-year study to determine how languages should be taught in America. This study was launched at the Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association in Boston in December, 1952. Their help in promoting language study in the grades under the direction of Professor William R. Parker and his most capable staff is invaluable. Mr. Donald D. Walsh is the Associate Director of the MLA Program.

My editorial work in the Modern Language Journal, in Methodology and Elementary Education, keeps me in touch with what everybody is doing in the field with which we are dealing. Most of the meetings of language associations have given some attention to the elementary school work, and some of the associations have given considerable attention to it. Some of the conferences have

published and distributed the results of their deliberations. Of great help to elementary school modern language teachers is a twenty-page document entitled "Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools: Some Questions and Answers." This was the result of a Conference attended by twelve leading language educators, among them my own Director of Language Education, Dr. Clarence Wachner of Detroit. The MLA that generously and wisely sponsored this Conference, held in New York in December, 1953, has concisely reported the salient points of the discussions.

Of great significance for the profession has been the publishing of the work of Dr. Theodore Andersson, The Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary School. A preliminary edition of this timely work has been published by D. C. Heath and Company. We may be sure that other editions of this work will follow.

I wish that time would permit me to give data regarding the teaching of modern foreign languages in the elementary schools of each state where interest in the work has been shown. The situation by states, listed alphabetically, has been prepared by the MLA and is available.

The teaching of modern foreign languages in the elementary schools is not a new idea. One program dates back to 1899; the oldest current program, the outstanding Cleveland Program, to 1921. Two others well-known are those of Oakwood-Dayton, Ohio, and Natchitoches, Louisiana, begun in the 1920's. Six of the programs in existence today originated in the 1930's, Brooklyn in 1931, Texas in 1943, and Los Angeles in 1944. From 1940 through 1948 another 19 programs began. The present trend may be dated from 1949 when ten new programs came into durable existence. Other well-known and well-established programs are those in San Diego, California; Fairfield and New Britain, Connecticut; Washington, D. C.; Emporia and Lawrence, Kansas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; St. Louis, Missouri; Somerville, New Jersey; Carlsbad, New Mexico; Jamestown, New York; York, Pennsylvania; Corpus Christi and El Paso, Texas; Richmond, Virginia; and Seattle, Washington. More recent are those in Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which are developing extensively.

I quote the statistics that follow from the "Foreign Language Newsletter," No. 1, March, 1954, prepared by Dr. Kenneth Mildenberger of the MLA: "In the autumn of 1953 modern foreign languages were being taught in the public elementary schools of at least 145 American cities and towns in 33 states and the District of Columbia. At least 614 different schools and more than 145,000 elementary pupils were involved. Small children were learning Spanish in at least 409 schools in 27 states; French, in 251 schools in 20 states; German, in 30 schools in 6 states; and all three languages were being taught children in Washington, D. C. Italian was being taught in a single elementary school in

Atlantic City, New Jersey.... At least fifty-four new programs started in the fall of 1953, and many were scheduled to start in the early months of 1954."

The present programs begin anywhere from the kindergarten to the seventh or eighth grades. The most frequently mentioned starting point for learning a second language is the third grade. However, it is worthy of note that many begin with the kindergarten or the first grade.

Throughout the United States wide public interest is evidenced in the support of the elementary school language program. Administrative officers in many school systems have given their wholehearted effort in making modern foreign language instruction available to many more elementary school children. They have adjusted the program of numerous elementary grades so as to make possible in their school program this innovation--the introduction of modern foreign languages. Concurrently, curriculum experts, superintendents, principals, high school teachers, and grade teachers have most capably made necessary adjustments in the elementary school curriculum to provide this instruction.

And this brings us to a point of great opportunity and, at the same time, considerable danger. If we go forward, much can be accomplished; if we lag or hesitate, we may lose out entirely. I must confess that I see no evident indication that we are lagging or hesitating, but the danger is there.

Elementary school children learn a language easily and precisely, and beyond a certain age, the younger a child the easier it is for him to acquire a new language. Language learning is a normal function of childhood, and the consensus seems to be that the study of a new language should begin at an early age.

Psychologists agree that a youngster's ear is attuned to intonations, accents, pronunciations, and that his tongue imitates language sounds with flexibility without effort, and without that self-consciousness that at a later age is a great handicap. Children who are from five to ten years old are at the best age to learn to understand and speak a second language. It should be constantly kept in mind, however, that in the early years children learn practically everything by memory and by ear and not by reasoning.

I should want to quote at this time the eminent neurologist and brain surgeon, Dr. William Penfield, Director of the Montreal Neurological Institute, who writes: "There are three or four areas that are specialized for the formulation of speech and the acquisition of language.... There is an age when the child has a remarkable capacity to utilize these areas for the learning of a language, a time when several languages can be learned

simultaneously as easily as one language....Why should languages make their appearance long after a boy or a girl has lost full capacity for language learning? Why should the efficient methods so long employed at the mother's knee be replaced by a technique of grammar and syntax at a time when the mechanisms of the brain employed in learning speech are relatively inflexible and senescent?"

The well-known language specialist, Dr. Emile de Sauzé, has observed that children are much more efficient at language learning, including speaking, than adolescents are, and Mr. Carlos Rivera believes that the best time to start a second language is at the very beginning of school.

I find myself in agreement with these teachers and many others who believe that the best time to start a second language is at the very beginning of school, always following an oral method. I should not fail to mention here that interjecting English words and phrases to expedite the work should prove to be beneficial in more ways than one. As to the reading and writing of the second language, it is very commonly agreed that it should not be begun before the third or fourth grade.

Should foreign languages be available to all children when possible? This is a question on which there is no complete agreement. Dr. Emile de Sauzé and Dr. Theodore Huebener are of the opinion that classes in modern foreign languages in the elementary schools are only for the bright children. However, Dr. de Sauzé is following a plan to which he has been attached all along and with which he has been successful. He very likely would meet with success also with children less bright, and Dr. Huebener, in New York City, is faced with an unusual problem: the large number of children in whose homes English is not spoken regularly, and who presumably should concentrate on English during their early schooling. He would, I believe, make the opportunity of learning a foreign language general under different circumstances.

There are many others who favor making available to all children the opportunity to study foreign languages. Professor Manuel Guerra who has studied the Los Angeles Plan says: "The Los Angeles Plan affirms that the average and below average child acquires something vitally important to his growth, social consciousness, and sympathetic understanding of people in language study. It never loses sight of sympathetic attitudes and understanding."

Dr. Jonah W. D. Skiles in his article, "Languages for World Leadership," says: "We must see that no American child is denied the opportunity of becoming acquainted at first hand with the culture and ideals (or ways of thinking) of at least one foreign people."

There are several leaders in close contact with the work who have become champions of the idea that all children can profit greatly from the study of foreign languages. Among these we must always mention Miss Edna Babcock of Seattle, Mrs. Ruth Ginsberg of Los Angeles, Emilie Margaret White of Washington, and Miss Marjorie Johnston of the U. S. Department of Education, herself an outstanding example of the efficacy of the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary schools.

To me, an ideal situation is a second language program designed to serve all children to the best of their individual abilities.

Which second language or languages shall we offer in our elementary school program?

The determining factor in the choice of the modern foreign language to be offered in the elementary school naturally will be and is the preference indicated by a majority of the parents. Local conditions may influence this choice. Some communities, in accordance with their individual cultural backgrounds, will naturally want to introduce one or another language as a second language, and there will be some communities that will want more than one language. Some communities in Pennsylvania or Wisconsin may prefer German; Florida or the Southwest will likely prefer Spanish; and Louisiana will have a preference for French. In some of the large cities we may expect a variety of preferences.

What would seem to be our best approach to the subject?

It is commonly admitted that the aural-oral approach, with emphasis on conversation, is the best method to teach languages in the grades. Miss Agnes Brady of Lawrence, Kansas, uses the aural-oral-choral method.

The first two years should be devoted to training the ear and the vocal organs. Modern foreign language teaching must be made real by the use of the many visual and auditory teaching materials. Dr. Theodore Andersson says: "A living language is a spoken language. It is this aspect of the language that is best and most easily learned in the earliest grades of the elementary school." It is very desirable to have the children in contact with the language every day, even if that contact be for only fifteen minutes. It is also most desirable to have this direct aural-oral method continue in the second and third grades, as, of course, it should throughout the second language experience. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades the children will be eager to read and write. Once again I quote Dr. Earl J. McGrath: "Our concern should be to introduce modern foreign language instruction in the elementary school in such forms and through such methods as will excite the interest of the children and guarantee maximum learning within the limited time available."

It is most gratifying to see that more and more the second language program is becoming an integral part of the elementary school program. Dr. Vincenzo Cioffari, Modern Language Editor, D. C. Heath and Company, whose excellent article we published in the March, 1954, Modern Language Journal, says: "Social studies deal with the community. Every classroom has children of eight or ten different national backgrounds, all based on different languages and customs. Isn't it the purpose of social studies to teach understanding of the community? ... In some communities foreign languages are integrated into the present program by teaching skills in the foreign language, as for example numbers, colors, hours."

Modern foreign language instruction can be and has been integrated into the curriculum of many an elementary school without displacing other essential areas of instruction. In the elementary schools modern foreign language instruction must be a part of the total curriculum; it must be and it can be related to and integrated into the other experiences of the school day as social studies, literature, music, art, drama, physical education, home science, all the language arts. It is most essential that the vocabulary content for each grade level be that which can be closely integrated with the subject of study for that level in the school system. Professor Andersson stresses the importance of acting and dramatic ability to help the interest along, and Professor Guerra stresses the benefits of language clubs in the grade schools.

One can almost come to the conclusion that upon the teacher's personality depends the success or failure of almost any method or technique that is followed. Perhaps it would be well to read again the article full of thoughtful observations and conclusions which the Modern Language Journal published for Dr. Stephen Freeman of Middlebury College in the issue of April, 1949, under the title, "What About the Teacher?"

How and where may we find and have we found the teachers needed to introduce the second language programs into the elementary schools? Numerous experimental programs have proved most successful. School administrators have exercised much ingenuity in securing language teachers to lay the groundwork and to carry on the plans for their language programs. College and university graduate students preparing to teach modern foreign languages have given their services. Outstanding teachers have been given in-service preparation for their language instruction in the elementary grades. High school and college teachers each week have given hours of instruction in nearby elementary schools. The wise use of exchange teachers and Fulbright scholars can make possible some language instruction in some school systems. One staff member may combine his elementary school language teaching with part-time work in another field. The language specialist may be called upon for cooperation from a local or nearby university.

As to the teaching material, there are many types of sound reproducing devices which can serve as models; tape recordings and film strips can be used effectively as well as radio and television. Some of the methods used effectively in television by Professors Manuel Guerra, Joseph Raymond, and J. Alan Pfeffer can be transferred to the school work in elementary language teaching.

As might be expected, there is need for teaching material in each language, in some more than in others. There is need for a series of syllabi, well planned, detailed, yet flexible in order to be adapted to a variety of local situations. Some 75 percent of the Spanish programs reporting to Dr. Mildenberg operate without syllabi of their own. Some borrow here and there from syllabi used in older Spanish programs. Some teachers are at work on their own.

In conclusion, we must make a beginning even if in some cases the teaching may not be completely satisfactory. Let us use existing resources to the best advantage. All possible sources for promoting the study of a second language should be tapped. Our apprehensions about standards should not hold us back. We will work to see that these standards are raised with time rather than delay the introduction of languages. Teacher training institutions are offering training in modern foreign languages for the elementary school teachers. Colleges and universities are alert to this emergency, and this summer there will be some 46 modern foreign language schools and workshops in 26 states which will deal with the language teaching problems of the elementary schools. The list of these institutions has been prepared by the MLA, and will appear in the May issue of the MLJ.

We must not wait. We must be wary of those who tell us to wait until teachers are prepared. The whole impetus could bog down in this task. It is far more desirable, I should think, to begin wherever a beginning is possible and to keep the work going in the best possible manner. We realize that for some time to come the supply of teachers qualified to give instruction of the type that we desire will be limited. It would be a great misfortune indeed to allow this fact to become an obstacle to taking preliminary steps to advance in this level of language work. Let us deal with the present situation in realistic fashion. The teachers now available will improve their competence by proper motivation. Noteworthy results have already been achieved. The present interest must not be discouraged in any way. We will meet this challenge!

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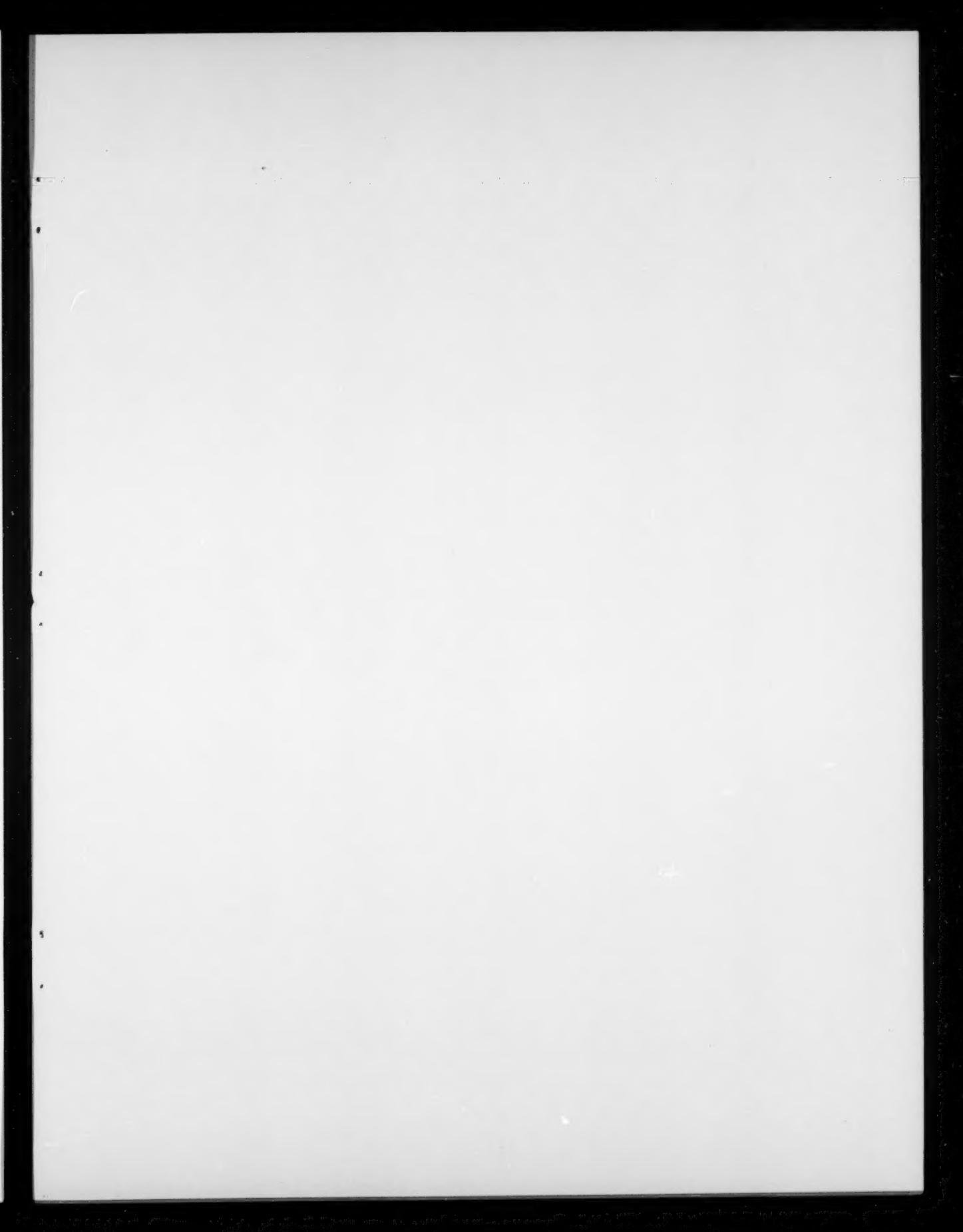
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